DOCTRINAL DISCOURSES

BY
REV. A. M. SKELLY, O. P.

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DOCTRINAL DISCOURSES

For the Sundays and the Chief
Festivals of the Year

IN FIVE VOLUMNS

By

REV. A. M. SKELLY, O. P.

VOLUME FIVE

From the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost to the
end of the Ecclesiastical Year

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DEDICATION

This, the last volume of my "Doctrinal Discourses" is affectionately dedicated to my devoted friend and patron, the late Mrs. B. S. Shea, of San Francisco. One of America's hidden saints she, with her pious daughters took a personal interest in their production, to which they largely contributed by their encouragement and means.

To me personally she was more of a mother than a friend, and her beautiful and cultured home was always open to me and my fellows, exiled missionaries from Banbha.

May she rest in Peace.

A. M. S.

FOREWORD

Our first word will be one of apology to our readers for the tardy appearance of this, the last volume of our "Doctrinal Discourses." This was owing, in part, to the attention we were obliged to give to other matters; in part, to the want of necessary funds for its production.

Our readers will notice in this volume the disappearance of the synopsis at the head of the several pieces. This was caused by a plethora of matter available, together with a desire to keep the volume of a uniform size with the preceding ones. They will, however, overlook the want in consideration of the new, and, we trust, interesting matter subjoined. To further compensate for the omission, we have inserted more frequent, and, shall I say, more explicit headings of the subject matter contained in the text. With these few remarks we beg to take leave of our readers, asking of them a remembrance now and again in their good prayers.

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS

PAGE

Dedication v
Foreword vi

INTRODUCTORY CONFERENCES

First Conference — The Holiness Required in Priests.
They Must "Put Off the Old Man" 1
They Must Be "Renewed in the Interior of Their Hearts" 4
Recommendations for the Presentation of the Ecclesiastical Spirit 7

Second Conference—The Holiness Required in Priests.
They Must "Put on the New Man" 10
In What Priestly Holiness Consists 13

Third Conference — The Learning Required in Priests.
The Priest as Mediator 16
The Priest as Guide 18
The Priest as Teacher 19

Fourth Conference — The Learning Required in Priests.
The Priest as Judge 22
The Physician of Souls 23
Sad Consequences of Ignorance in Priests 24

Fifth Conference—Duties of Pastors.
Zeal in Preaching the Divine Word 26

Sixth Conference—Duties of Pastors.
Vigilance Over Their Flock 30

Seventh Conference—Duties of Pastors.
Constancy, Order, Method 34
Assiduity in the Direction of Souls 35

FIRST PART

PAGE

Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—Advantages of Membership of a Religious Society.
Special Graces Conferred on the Members. . 38
Association of Spiritual Gifts and Services. .. 40

Second Sermon—Advantages of Membership of a Religious Society.
Extrinsic Helps to Holiness 42
Indulgences Conferred by the Church..... . 44

Third Sermon—False Teachers.
Interpretation of the Text..... 46
Application to Present Day Manifestations 49

Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—The Excellence of the Rosary.
The Vocal Element..... 52

Second Sermon—The Excellence of the Rosary.
The Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries 58
It Develops in Us the Supernatural Life. . .. 60

Third Sermon—The Excellence of the Rosary.
Its Mysteries Respond to the Phases of the Spritiual Life in Us..... 62
It Teaches Us to Combat our Vices..... 64
Its General Effects..... 65

Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—The Grace of Baptism.
"The Light of Our Soul"..... 67
It Gives Society with the Father..... 68

Second Sermon—The Grace of Baptism.
It Gives Society with the Son and with the Holy Ghost 71
The "Bath of Regeneration"..... 73

PAGE

Third Sermon—Baptism.
Its Necessity 74
A Means of Salvation 75
The Matter and Form of 77
Practical Information 79

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—The Sanctification of Sunday.
Preliminary Study 81
Servile Works Forbidden 83

Second Sermon—The Sanctification of Sunday.
Sinful Works Forbidden 86
Idleness and Excessive Diversion Forbidden 89
The Sunday Horarium 90

Third Sermon—The Sanctification of Sunday.
The Sunday's Rest 91
Spiritual Activity 94

Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—Love of the Neighbor.
God's Providential Disposition 98
The Commandment 100

Second Sermon—Love of the Neighbor.
The "New Commandment" 102
The Pattern of Our Love—Its Qualities 105

Third Sermon—The First Commandment.
False Worship of the True God 109
The Evil of Mixed Marriages 110

Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—Respect Due to Our Holy Places.
"The House of God" 116
Reverential Awe of the Saints 118

PAGE

Second Sermon — Respect Due to Our Holy Places.
"The House of Prayer" 120
The Theatres of God's Wonders 123

Nnieteenth Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—The Holy Eucharist.
Its Titles—Transubstantion 125

Second Sermon—The Holy Eucharist.
The Real Presence Shown from Scripture 128

Third Sermon—The Holy Eucharist.
The Teaching of the Church and the Belief of the Faithful 132

Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—The Duties of Parents.
The Rearing of and the Providing for Their Children 136

Second Sermon—The Duties of Parents.
The Rearing of and the Providing for Their Children 141
The Social Crime 143

Third Sermon—The Duties of Parents.
The Training of Their Children—
The Mind 146
The Heart 149

Twenty-first Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—The Duties of Parents.
The Correcting of Their Children 153

Second Sermon—The Duties of Parents.
Mistakes in Correction 156
The "Arab" System 159

PAGE

Third Sermon—The Mercy of God.
The Old Dispensation....162
The Law of Grace....165
The Magdalen....167
The Priest in the Confessional....169

Twenty-second Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—The Duties of Children.
Love....173
Respect....176

Second Sermon—The Duties of Children.
Obedience....180
Service....181

Third Sermon—Justice.
"Thou Shalt Not Steal"....184
"Thou Shalt Not Covet"....186
"Give to Caesar What Belongs to Caesar"....189

Twenty-third Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—The End of Man.
The Noblest in God's Power to Ordain for Us....192

Second Sermon—The End of Man.
To Be Attained by the Keeping of the Commandments....197

Twenty-fourth Sunday After Pentecost—

First Sermon—The Eternity of Hell.
"The Darkness that Covers the Face of the Abyss"....201
No Truth More Clearly Established in Scripture....206
The Most Despair-provoking of the Evils that Afflict the Damned....207

PAGE

Second Sermon—Confirmation.
"A Great Sacrament" 210
It Confers the Plenitude of Spiritual Power. 212

Third Sermon—Confirmation.
It Confers the Fullness of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost 215
One of the "Sacraments of the Living" 217
By It We Are Made Soldiers of Christ 218

SECOND PART

Rosary Sunday—

First Sermon—The Rosary.
A Great Agency for the Sanctification of Souls 221
A Great Preservative of the Faith 223
The Beloved, and the Glory of Ireland 225

Second Sermon—The Rosary.
The Salvation of Christendom 229
The Origin, and Terminology, and Composition, and Qualities of 231
White, Crimson, and Gold 234
The Confraternity of 236

Thanksgiving Day—Oration.
Thankfulness Due to God 238
Homage Paid to God by the Church 241
The Subject of Our Thanksgiving 242

All Saints Day—Panegyric.
The Triumph of the Saints 244
The Lessons That Triumph Gives Us 247

All Souls Day—Sermon.
The Duty of Praying for the Dead—"A Holy and Wholesome Thought" 252

PAGE
The Sufferings of the Holy Souls....253
Appeal....256
America Day—Oration.
"Americanism"—
"The Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave"....259
Patriotism, a Great Christian Virtue....262
The Two Chief Duties of the Patriot....264
St. Patrick's Day—Oration.
The Irish Missionaries—
A Day of Gladness to the Peoples....268
The Darkest of the Dark Ages....269
Scotland Receives the Faith....270
The Conversion of England....272
The Irish Missionaries on the Continent....274
Their Wondrous Learning....275
"The Isle of Saints and Scholars"....277

THIRD PART

Holy Week—Palm Sunday Procession.
The Historic Background....281
The Triumphant Entry....284
Holy Thursday Celebration—
The Feast of the Passover....286
The Sacrifice of the New Law....287
The Three Hours' Agony—
The Seven Last Words....291
The First Word....292
The Second Word....295
The Third Word....298
The Fourth Word....302
The Fifth Word....305
The Sixth Word....311
The Seventh Word....315
Index....321

DOCTRINAL DISCOURSES

For the Sundays and the Chief Festivals of the Year

INTRODUCTORY CONFERENCES

FIRST CONFERENCE—THE HOLINESS REQUIRED IN PRIESTS

"I, therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called . . . Put off, according to former conversation, the old man who is corrupted according to the desire of error.

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

"And put on the new man, who according to God, is created in justice and holiness of truth."—Eph. IV, 22-24.

I

They must "put off the Old Man"

1. The great apostle devotes the last three chapters of his epistle to the Ephesians to a detailed exhortation to the practice of various virtues. And this, in order that, as he says, "they may walk in a manner worthy of the vocation to which they are called"—the high vocation of being admitted as members of the mystical body of Jesus Christ. And, in general, they are to "put off the old man"—the corrupted life and manners of paganism in which they lived before their call to the Christian religion.

They are to "be renewed in the spirit of their mind," or, as another rendering has it, "in the interior of their heart."

And, lastly, they are "to put on the new man," the spirit of Jesus Christ, "who, according to God, is created in justice and holiness of truth;" that is, to say, in true holiness.

They are to aspire after "true holiness," not, mark you, the legal holiness of the synagogue, or the "imputed holiness" of Protestant belief.

The apostle exhorts, to this threefold renewal in the Ephesians newly converted to the Christian religion.

And if he looks for this threefold renewal in the neophytes of Ephesus on the ground of their call to the Christian religion, how proper, dear Fathers, that I apply this threefold exhortation, aye, and in a more insistent manner to you, especially in those privileged days when you have leisure to reflect profoundly on the holiness of the priestly state. For the character of him who is admitted to a participation in the Priesthood of Jesus Christ is as far removed from that of the ordinary Christian, as is the character of the believer from that of the pagan.

I, therefore, beseech you, dearly beloved, that you walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called—the sublime vocation of the Christian priesthood.

2. And, first of all, you are to put off the old man; yes, the old man; for there are two men in us. There is the old Adam of our corrupt nature, with its pride and sensuality and other evil propensities which continually resist the calls of grace. These evil

leanings of our nature you must overcome by self-renunciation and penance, according to the condition laid down by our Lord Himself: "If anyone will come after Me, let him renounce himself."

Nor are you as priests to give yourselves to vulgar gratifications, natural and innocent as they may be, in which the ordinary faithful indulge. "For, no man," as the great apostle says, "enlisting in the military service of his prince occupies himself with the avocations of civil life," but is wholly taken up with the pursuits of his profession. People of the world may without offence pass an idle hour in card-playing and gambling in a moderate way, in hunting, and so forth. This is their method of life, for, ordinarily they are not called to the practice of very high virtue, and they are saved by the observance of the Commandments.

A priest, on the contrary, is bound to aspire after the perfection of the priesthood. He has enlisted in a special way in the militia of Jesus Christ. His life is to be absorbed in priestly pursuits and studies; nor are you permitted to fritter away your time in useless and desultory reading. How many priests squander the best hours of the day in pouring over the sporting columns of the newspaper and other useless trash to be found in the popular magazines, when they ordinarily find so little time for prayer and for the austere studies of their profession. Such indulgence is, as the mystic authors teach, the luxury of the mind, and a deliberate wastage of the time and gifts bestowed so liberally upon them by the Almighty.

And here, I would remind you, dear Fathers, of a thing that is sometimes forgotten, and it is, that the

first bearers of the honor of the priesthood were all religious; for, all the apostles professed in their entirety the Gospel counsels which are the essential conditions of the religious state.

II

They Must Be "Renewed in the Interior of Their Heart."

Hence, further, the apostle says unto you in the words of my text, "be you renewed in the interior of your heart,"—Not only must you disassociate yourselves from the ways of people of the world, even exemplary Catholics, who spend a good part of their time in social and worldly joys, but you must practise an interior renewal which will turn you to the cultivation of priestly ways and virtues.

Now, one of the graces we have most need of in order that we may conduct ourselves in all things as the faithful ministers of Jesus Christ, is the ecclesiastical spirit. As it is easy to lose it amid the cares and destractions of the world, we cannot repeat too often: "Be renewed in the interior of your heart." To establish this renewal with the greater facility and success let us learn what the ecclesiastical spirit consists in.

It is an abundant participation in the spirit of Jesus Christ Himself whose ministers we are. "But we have not received the spirit of this world," says St. Paul, "but the spirit which is of God." (1 Cor. II. 12). It is a gift of God which inspires us with the love of ecclesiastical functions, and which renders us capable of exercising them in a becoming manner. Hence, you shall know whether you have the eccle-

siastical spirit by these two signs: First, if you exercise with pleasure the functions of this state; and, second, if you are capable of acquitting yourself well of them.

An ecclesiastic, in order to have the spirit of his state, ought to have a particular attraction for the virtues that most of all belong to it—a perfect piety, an angelic purity, an ardent zeal for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls, a great love for the church, a singular love for prayer, for study, for labor. He ought to bear in all places the marks of his dignity. His exterior, his carriage, his garments, ought to be such as the church prescribes. He ought to love the functions of his state of life, to feel a joy in exercising them all indifferently, even the lesser ones, or those which might appear the lowest. What do I say—the lesser and the lowest? There is not one of them which is not infinitely lifted above what we deserve. This is the ideal the saints had of them.

When Saint Cyprian was consecrated to the service of the Lord, as Saint Gregory of Nazianzan tells us, he asked to be permitted to sweep the church, and to be appointed to the lowest functions of the ministry.

We read in the letters of this illustrious martyr that the holy confessors after having sustained rude combats for the defense of the faith held it an honor to exercise the offices of the Church which had the least distinction. This holy doctor, speaking of Aurelius, who had suffered for the faith, avows that he was worthy of the highest distinction in the church. Nevertheless, he could not dissemble that the degree of lector was an abundant reward of his

combats. Speaking of him, the holy doctor says: "Nothing was more proper and more becoming the voice of him who so gloriously confessed God, than to make the divine truths resound. He spoke with a courage inflamed with the holy desire to suffer martyrdom: he will announce the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which makes martyrs. When he was on the rack he was admired by the multitude and regarded as a miracle of constancy. His brethren will now be filled with joy at seeing and hearing him, when from the sacred pulpit he will announce the holy truths which ought to be the rule of our conduct."

In order to have the ecclesiastical spirit, it does not suffice to have a love for the functions of this state; we must, moreover, have the talents and the dispositions for discharging them well.

When God calls a man to any condition, and, above all, to the ecclesiastical state, He fills him with His spirit; and the characteristic of this spirit is to render men capable of exercising the functions of the state to which they are called. Thus we read that when God chose Beseleel and Ooliab to construct the tabernacle, He filled them with wisdom, understanding and knowledge, for all the works to which He had resolved to apply them. Saint Augustine maintains that what is said of Beseleel and Ooliab ought to be referred to the great truths denoted by the tabernacle, rather than to the tabernacle itself, which was only the figure; that is to say, that God wished to teach us by this figure that when He should call in the law of grace, ministers for His church, He would fill them with wisdom and understanding to discharge well the ecclesiastical functions.

III

Recommendations for the Preservation of the Ecclesiastical Spirit

1. Behold, what is the ecclesiastical spirit. See now whether you have received it, at least in some degree. If God has given it to you, have you preserved it, according to the words of the Apostle? "Extinguish not the spirit." (Thes. V. 19.)

Examine yourselves on this point seriously and before God. Have you preserved, and do you ordinarily possess the high spirit of the true priest? Have you the perfect piety of the fervent priest? Do you practise angelic chastity? Do you feel yourself animated with an ardent zeal for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls? Do you cultivate a singular love for prayer, for study, for labor?

Alas, how much it is to be feared lest this spirit of the priesthood be extinguished in you, since it appears so little in your conduct.

Take then today some measures to renew it. Here are one or two that are very useful. First, separate yourself from the spirit of the world which is entirely opposed to that of Jesus Christ. "You are not of this world," says our Lord to us, in the persons of His disciples. "I have chosen you and separated you from this world." This choice and this separation oblige us not to love what the world loves. The world loves only voluptousness and pleasures; it seeks only honors and money. A good ecclesiastic ought to set his heart on none of these. All that ought to occupy him is told him in what Saint Paul says to Timothy: "Be thou vigilant; labor in all

things; do the work of an evangelist; fulfill thy ministry; be sober: '*Sobrius esto.*" Heed well this advice, dear Fathers. An ecclesiastic ought to be sober in all things—in his repasts, in his recreations, in his conversations; sober in speaking, sober in using the goods and comforts that God accords to our weakness. Oh! how happy should we be if we found ourselves in the same dispositions in regard to the goods of this world, as Pope Eugenius did, to whom Saint Bernard renders this testimony, "I have nothing to say to you touching avarice; for I am aware that you have no more esteem for money than for straw."

A minister of the Lord ought finally to be sober in regard to the employments and charges that are offered him, not seeking them with eagerness, and not refusing them with too much obstinacy; but following this beautiful maxim of Saint Augustine: "Vos Exhortamur ut, si quam operam vestra mater ecclesia desideravit, nec elatione avida suscipiatis, nec blandiente desidia respuatis." "We entreat you if your mother, the Church desires you to undertake for her any work, that you neither take it up with a greedy elation, nor refuse it through a soothing idleness." Enter into these sentiments if you wish to renew in yourselves the ecclesiastical spirit.

2. A second means, which will be not less useful to you to this effect, is the practice of retreat one day in the month, in addition to some consecutive days, such as this at the end of the year. This is what the greatest saints have taught us by their example.

They did not excuse themselves from giving some time to the laboring for this interior renewal because of the crowd of affairs which the needs of the Church forced them to take on themselves.

On the contrary, it was that which obliged them to consecrate some days to retreat in order to examine themselves seriously, and to purify themselves from the faults they had committed in the commerce which charity obliged them to have with the world, to repair the negligence of other times, and to take for the future strong resolutions to act with more purity and zeal.

Imitate them; and often when celebrating the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, ask of Jesus Christ by the merits of His hidden life, the mystery of which is represented to you in that of the Eucharist, that He would accord you the grace of retiring from time to time to think more seriously of yourselves.

Fear not that you will lose time in this retreat. This leisure will be for you a great affair if you occupy yourselves in it as you ought for that of your salvation: "Let no one grudge me my leisure," says St. Augustine, "because my leisure has a great purpose."

SECOND CONFERENCE—THE HOLINESS REQUIRED IN PRIESTS

"Put on the new man, who, according to God, is created in justice and holiness of truth."—Eph. IV. 24).

I

They must "put on the New Man."

The Apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians would have the newly baptized Christians not only put off the old man, the corrupted manners and conversation to which they were adicted as pagans, and be renewed in the interior of their hearts: he would have them, moreover, put on the new man, who, according to God, i. e., in conformity with God's will, is created in justice and true holiness.

What is this holiness of which the apostle speaks?

Holiness, according to St. Thomas, bespeaks two things, cleanness and firmness: cleanness, in the mind; firmness, in the will; cleanness, in this, that the mind be abstracted from worldly things so that it may be applied to God, the Supreme Being; because the human mind, being created primarily for the contemplation of God, is soiled by contact with inferior things, just as silver is soiled by mixture with lead.

And firmness. Firmness also is required in this, that the will be attached to God as its first beginning and its last end. Holiness, therefore, connotes the mind and will of man as attaching themselves and all their acts to God. As such it differs in noth-

ing from religion except that it is more general in its application; for religion is so called, in as much as it offers to God a due worship; but holiness is so called, in as much as a man offers to God not only those works which pertain to the Divine worship, but also those that come from the other virtues.

We priests are called to the cultivation of a special holiness. "Be ye perfect," says Jesus Christ to the first priests. "Be ye holy, as I am holy," says God to Moses. Now, can we, looking over our past lives, say that we have put on this new man, who, as God tells us, is created in justice and true holiness? or, can we not with reason say of many ecclesiastics what St. Bernard said before now of certain religious, that they have only the habit and the externals of their profession, without its spirit? They content themselves with having the beard shaved, with wearing the Roman collar and the cassock, and with practising some exercises of piety; but at bottom they have not that true sanctity which the holiness of our state demands, and to which Saint Paul invites us by these words, which are so familiar to us: "Put on the new man, who was created by God in justice and true holiness." We shall make, then, a very useful meditation if we consider the reasons which oblige priests of the New Law to be holy; it is sufficient to instruct us to compare them to those of the Old.

Behold, then, what God said to Moses: "Speak to the priests, children of Aaron, and thou shalt say to them . . . . They shall be holy to their God, and shall not profane His Name; for, they offer the burnt offering of the Lord, and the bread of their God, and therefore they shall be holy. And they

offer the loaves of proposition. Let them therefore be holy, because I am also holy, the Lord who sanctify them." (Lev. XXI. 6-8).

Remark how in these few words the Lord says even three times, that His ministers should be holy. Conclude from this what ought priests of the New Law to be, they whose ministry is not simply to offer to God incense and bread, but the Holy of holies; and Him who is the Victim of propitiation for the salvation of the world; those who discharge the ministry of angels; that is to say, which belongs to angels rather than to men, as St. Chrysostom renders it: "Let them be holy, because I am holy, the Lord who sanctify them."

Everything is holy in a minister of the church; his character is holy, his functions are holy. It is then very just that his life be holy also. What is a priest? He is a vicar of Jesus Christ. "He left priests vicars of Himself," says the Council of Trent, (Sess. 15, c. 5); that is to say, that a priest holds the place of Jesus on earth, and that he ought to represent Him in his whole conduct.

And, where find this image and this representation of Jesus Christ in a priest if he is not holy? Where find Jesus Christ zealous for the glory of His Father? Jesus Christ poor? Jesus Christ full of wisdom? Jesus Christ passing His life in labors and sufferings, in a priest vicious and idle?

We were constituted vicars of Jesus Christ at the same time that we were vested with the character of priests. We ought to represent Him not only in the church, in the confessional, at the altar, but moreover in the world and before the eyes of all men, by the conformity of our life with His. Behold how

far our holiness ought to go. Hence, if we have only a common virtue, we are not worthy vicars of Jesus Christ. "You see that in priests nothing common is looked for," says St. Ambrose, "for how can they be distinguished from the people, who have no qualities to mark them off from the people."

Reflect well on this, and weep over the little attention you have paid to the holiness of your state.

II

In What Priestly Holiness Consists.

Consider in what this holiness consists.

It is, first, in bringing to the priesthood holiness of life, or at least in having made sufficient preparation for the faults of youth by a sincere penance. Saint Paul, speaking of deacons, says, that they ought to be well proved before-hand, and then admitted to the sacred ministry if they are found not guilty of any crime. (I. Tim. III-10.)

The Church has always followed this doctrine of the apostles. She wishes that her ministers be proved; that is to say, according to the explanation of a great pope, that those only are to be received to orders who have been duly examined, and who have shown by the holiness of their life and by the practice of virtue, that they have striven to render themselves worthy of the rank to which they have been raised. "Let no cleric be ordained till he be proved either by an examination before the bishop or by the testimony of the people." (Ep. Nichol, ad Cler. c. 5) The same pope says expressly that he meant to speak of a long examination. There should be an examina-

tion where the whole course of the life of the subject is considered with care; because, often in probing deeper, one discovers disorders in a life that appeared at first innocent.

In those examinations the Church laid aside no precaution. The people even were consulted, as Saint Cyprian testifies in one of his epistles, "Behold for the entrance into the ecclesiastical state."

2nd. When we are engaged in it and when the Church has chosen to place us in the ranks of her ministers, we must maintain ourselves with firmness in the state we have embraced. You are honored with the ecclesiastical character, character the holiest that has ever been, says St. Ambrose, and, therefore, you are obliged to live now more holily than you ever lived before. Your actions must respond to the holiness of your name and profession.

Be not content to avoid great faults. Avoid also the lesser, which, as the Council of Trent says, are always important in those who by their state are obliged to live in an eminent holiness. (Sess. 22, C. I. de Refor.)

Regulate yourself in such a manner that no one can remark anything in you which does not inspire love for religion, and which does not show that you are entirely penetrated with the greatness of your ministry, and all occupied with sanctifying yourself and laboring for the sanctification of others.

3rd. Ecclesiastical holiness demands, finally, that we should propose to ourselves unceasingly to make new progress in virtue. "If you say: 'I have done enough', you are a lost man," says St. Augustine. (Serm. 109, Alias. 15, de Verb. Apost.) This max-

im of St. Augustine applies above all to ecclesiastics, who by their state are obliged to so great a perfection. Hence, listen not to those who say to you, that you can rest yourself, and that you have done enough, but listen rather to him who says to you: "Arise, for you have yet a great way to go." (3 Reg. 1, 7.)

Examine yourselves on these three sorts of holiness with which the ecclesiastical state ought to be accompanied. What holiness had you when you entered the clerical state? "Let clerics be holy," says St. Jerome to Rusticus. "So live, therefore, that you soil not your youth by any stain; so that you may ascend to the altar as a virgin from her couch." Is it thus that you have entered the sanctuary? Since you have become an ecclesiastic, in what holiness have you lived? Finally, have you progressed; or rather, have you not become relaxed? Ah, here is the point for daily reflection, contrition, resolutions, and actions. Since you must walk with great courage in the way of perfection fortify yourselves with that Divine nourishment which you received at the altar, and try to convince yourselves of this truth, enunciated by St. Jerome: nothing contributes more to the contempt of the Church than to see that lay people are holier, and lead better lives than ecclesiastics.

THIRD CONFERENCE—THE LEARNING REQUIRED IN PRIESTS

The Priest as Mediator

The subject that I have to propose for your consideration today is one of a special character. It is a very important one, however, and one that should be deeply pondered over by those called to the ecclesiastical state. That subject is the knowledge required in priests; and hence, the zeal for study those who have been raised to that state, and those who are preparing for it, ought to have.

But at the outset, would it not appear like showing light to the sun, to try and prove to priests the necessity of zeal for the acquirement of ecclesiastical knowledge? For, have not priests always been recognized as one of the most learned bodies in the world? Have not priests distinguished themselves in every department of learning? And is it not one of the tests of our vocation that we be possessed of superior talents, and that we have an aptitude and a zeal for the acquirement of knowledge?

All this is true, and it would seem superfluous to enter into a detail of proofs which establish the necessity you have of zeal for learning.

However, laying aside these considerations, I desire before you leave your retreat, and especially as some of you are at the commencement of your scholastic year, to lay before you some reflections with regard to the necessity of knowledge in those who are called to the ecclesiastical state.

And I say that it is only necessary to consider

the state, the dignity, the rank, the character and destination of a minister of the Church, to establish this necessity. He is mediator, guide, physician, judge, and teacher of the people. He is called "the light of the world," "the salt of the earth," "the angel of the Lord of Hosts." What lights, what knowledge are there not required in one who is called on to fulfill qualities so high and charges so tremendous? and if he does not respond with all his abilities to so high and holy a vocation, may that not be said of him which a holy Doctor said of those who possess dignities, and live unworthy of them, that they cast precious stones into the mire? Let us consider one by one the demands that those high qualities make on him that is called to them.

A mediator cannot succeed in his enterprise if he does not know perfectly the means to be employed to bring about the union and the peace for which he labors. He must of necessity enter into the humors, the mind, the inclinations of those whom he wishes to unite. He must know how to take the most just measures for the accomplishment of his object, and this especially when he engages in affairs of great consequence, and ones that present great difficulties.

Now, what is the mediation with which priests are charged? Is it not to conciliate God with sinners? What enterprise more difficult? He must overthrow the wall of division that separates them; that is, he must destroy the monster, mortal sin. He must introduce the life of grace into a soul in which the darkness of hell reigned supreme before.

Do we not see that temporal sovereigns, when they desire to arrange certain affairs which they regard

as important, choose for this purpose out of an infinite number of persons of merit, the most accomplished subject they can find?

Ah, brethren, what proportion between the most important state negotiations and those with which priests are charged?—to wrench the arms from the Almighty hands of the God of vengeance—to arrest the strokes of His anger—to change the will of the impious, and to unite heaven and earth: that is, sinful man with God, establishing between them a profound peace and a perfect friendship after a war so cruel and a hatred so bitter.

The Priest as Guide.

The quality of guide no less demands knowledge. It is evident that in order to be able to lead anyone, it is necessary to know the way: otherwise, both guide and guided fall into the ditch. But what is the way by which the priest is to lead men? Is it not by the way of God's commandments—the paths of justice and of truth—the road to salvation and perfection—the path which the Saviour has marked out for us in ascending to Calvary, and from Calvary to the glory of the Father?

It is a way where there are many obstacles to avoid, many precipices to fear, many enemies to combat, many temptations to surmount. It is that way which Jesus Christ calls straight, and which none can traverse without crucifying his flesh with its concupiscences, without trampling the world with its maxims under foot.

What discernment is there not required in order not to be deceived in the choice of this narrow way? It is one, moreover, amid many paths of error, the

more dangerous as they appear the more secure to men who are led by false lights, and with regard to which the most enlightened are only too often deceived? Those usages so long established in the world, and which are, nevertheless, only detestable abuses—those customs so authorized, but which can never prescribe against God's law—those examples so pernicious—those prejudices which have such power over minds; those, I say, are so many ways not only dangerous but evidently bad; and yet, people in the world rush blindly into them, walk in them without scruple, and by them arrive heedlessly at eternal death.

But that which is most frightful is this, that sinners who walk in those evil ways with such blindness and passion, because they appear agreeable and easy, when they meet with guides who wish to withdraw them from them, do all in their power to draw them also into them. And, would to God, they had never succeeded in so evil an enterprise?

Finally, that which renders the function of guide in the way of salvation still more difficult is, that the elect are to be led to their end by different ways. We must have regard to many different things—to temperaments, to employments, to genius, to talents, to dispositions.

The Priest as Teacher

1. The function of teacher, which a priest is called on to discharge, and which is inseparable from his state, is no whit easier to fulfill. If those who occupy themselves entirely in the study of a science or an art, although it be not very difficult, confess, nevertheless, that they always find something new in

it; if the higher arts and sciences are being perfected more and more from age to age, and will go on progressing to the end of time; what are we to judge of the "art of arts," of that sublime science where the greatest geniuses after a study extending over the longest life only come to discover their ignorance of it?

What an abyss, in fact, is scholastic theology? What an inexhaustible source of difficulties, moral theology? What a vast field of research, positive theology, which embraces the knowledge of holy Scripture, tradition, ecclesiastical and civil law, and the rules that regulate the discernment of lawfully established custom from those that are an abuse? All these have respect to the pulpit and to the sacred tribunal. I cannot pass over the accurate knowledge required for the proper administration of the Sacraments, or for the performance of other ecclesiastical functions; and, yet, how many priests who, having given up the study of the ecclesiastical sciences, blunder blindly in the performance of those high functions?

A priest, I say, cannot in conscience remain wilfully ignorant of any one of these branches of knowledge, (I speak now only of that which is essential to his ministry), without falling into very considerable faults and blunders.

2. But, one might ask, how are we to acquire a knowledge of so many different things, and with study so prodigious? This is a very natural cause of anxiety, since we are obliged to spare nothing that we may acquire a knowledge of things that we are bound to know.

Well, I will tell you. By continued and persevering study. By retirement and separation from the world. By the careful management of our time that we may not lose a moment. By consultation with humility and submission with those who are more learned than ourselves. By distrust of our own lights —these are means that we ought to employ to get instructed, and to act otherwise is to draw upon ourselves the curse which is pronounced against ignorant priests who thus render themselves accountable for all the consequences of their ignorance.

Someone will say, perhaps, that this would be a very painful labor, and an occupation very wearisome—that it would be to bury one's self alive in a sad retirement, and to sacrifice the chief enjoyments of life. That may be true, dear Fathers. But let us remember that the ecclesiastical state is a state of labor, mortification, and suffering. We have embraced it wilfully. We ought to have known the sacrifice which the adoption of this state entails.

But are we more privileged than the rest of men? Consider the toil and care of so many people in the world, the hard and almost insupportable life of so many artisans and laborers. Lastly, shall we not do for heaven what people do every day for vanity and curiosity. How many are there who toil on from year's end to year's end in their study in order to acquire a vain reputation for learning? They forego all the pleasures of life. They condemn themselves to perpetual solitude. They neglect their property and families.

And do not then, dear Fathers, the immense treasures of eternity and the immense weight of glory which God prepares for laborious priests—the crown

of immortality; do not all these, I say, deserve as much from us as human glory and the other earthly vanities deserve from worldlings? See the example of great churchmen, such as a Bossuet or a Cardinal Wiseman, who produced their great works by utilizing scraps of time while waiting for a stage coach, on a journey, or in a public hostelry, time that others waste in insipid talk or harmful indulgence.

FOURTH CONFERENCE—THE LEARNING REQUIRED IN PRIESTS

The Priest as Judge

Priests are constituted judges to pronounce sentence of life or death; nay, of life or death eternal—sentence which regards the salvation or damnation of souls.

Give serious attention to what I am going to say, dear Fathers. In order to pronounce a definitive sentence on which depends the allotment of a considerable sum of money, the opinions of several judges are consulted. They give judgment only after a long examination, after having heard many times the claims of the parties concerned, and these put forward by the ablest lawyers, after having read and examined with care the titles and documents in the possession of the several parties, after having taken the advice of the best legal authorities and conferred together—after having taken all these measures to secure a just distribution, at last only the majority of votes decides.

How many precautions over a little temporal good; whilst a priest is obliged to pronounce alone, sen-

tences which consign to heaven or to hell—to pronounce, sometimes, a large number in a short space of time, and with scarcely any leisure to reflect seriously on what he does, surrounded by a crowd of people with dispositions only too doubtful. Tell me, is this thought not capable of striking terror into the soul of a confessor the most intrepid; or, rather, the least sensible of the danger of his ministry?

The Physician of Souls.

Finally, priests as physicians of souls o u g h t have great knowledge, lest they kill instead of cure, and lead into the abyss of perdition those who address themselves to them, instead of withdrawing from it those who have the misfortune of tending there. They ought to know and distinguish the different maladies of souls, their sources, their principles, their consequences, and their effects.

The art of curing the body is very difficult, and the ablest in the profession of medicine acknowledge that what they are ignorant of in this great art far surpasses what they know; because the human body is a marvel of divine workmanship, and there are besides, almost as many different temperaments as there are different persons.

Now, my dear Fathers ,are we not obliged to agree that by how much the more excellent is the soul than the body; by so much the more difficult is it to cure the former, than the latter. Be not surprised then, if the Church demands with so much rigor, knowledge in her ministers; if she has always regarded ignorance as an irregularity of divine and ecclesiastical right; if the Fathers of the Church call ignorant priests monsters, and objects of horror; if the people

themselves have such contempt for them; and if the Holy Scriptures load them with curses: "Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will reject thee, that thou shalt not do the office of the priesthood to Me. And there shall be like people, like priest; and I will visit their way upon them, as I will repay them their devices."—(Osee III, 6-9.)

The Sad Consequences of Ignorance in Priests.

1. I could, if I did not fear to abuse your patience, enter upon the detail of the sad consequences of ignorance in priests. I should have the privilege of reminding you of what you yourselves have so often remarked, that ignorance greatly dishonors a priest. How do people ordinarily regard an ignorant priest? Is he not an object of contempt to his fellow priests, and the subject of ridicule and raillery to the people? This ignorance leads him to an irregular life, because finding no taste for study, he throws himself into company and amusements unbecoming his state. An ignorant priest renders himself guilty of a prodigious number of faults in his ministry and thereby treasures up for himself wrath against the day of wrath. He falls insensibly into a frightful disgust for spiritual things; and, lastly, he comes to a deplorable state of blindness and hardness of heart, because these are the natural consequences of wilful ignorance of one's duties. He gives loose reins to his passions. Conscience becomes dumb and he finds himself without fear at the gate of impenitence.

But, at the hour of death, what surprise; or, rather, what despair for the unfortunate priest whom ignorance shall have conducted to the abyss of eternal misery? What answer will he give when he shall

see in his own person the accomplishment of the terrible threat which the Lord has made in Holy Scripture? "because thou hast repelled knowledge, I will repel thee."

2. Let us fear, dear Fathers, such evils, and in order that we may avoid them, let us apply ourselves seriously to acquire the knowledge becoming our state. And that we may animate ourselves with the greater earnestness in the prosecution of our holy study, let us recall the magnificent promises which the Almighty will accomplish in future ages, of causing "to shine in heaven as stars of ravishing beauty, those who shall have enlightened the neighbor with the light of their counsels;" and that of the Apostle who says that, "by a little labor here, we shall merit to enjoy eternally the immense weight of glory of the elect."

In this life even do we not find greater satisfaction in reading and study; in listening to the sacred authors who speak to us still an admirable, though silent language, than in mingling in the tumult of the world, and in listening to so many vaporings of persons who never honor us less than when they see us too often; or, rather, who despise us to our face, when we make ourselves too familiar with them.

But, as knowledge without charity puffeth up, and as nothing is more dangerous than knowledge badly employed, let us render ourselves holy, useful, and edifying, that we may taste the precious fruits of it in the kingdom of heaven.

FIFTH CONFERENCE—DUTIES OF PASTORS

"You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and have appointed you that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain; that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may give it you."—(John XV. 16.)

Zeal in Preaching the Divine Word

1. Thus spoke our Lord to His disciples, and in doing so He would remind them that their present privileged condition was not the result of any past merits of theirs, or of their own choice or election. It came about solely through His exceeding goodness and mercy to them. He would further remind them that He had a definite object in view in selecting them; and it was that they go forth and labor in His vineyard, labor, namely, in the sanctification of His people. This address of our Lord is as applicable to us priests in our day, as it was to the Apostles in theirs. For, are we not the successors of the Apostles, called to the same ministry, discharging the same functions as they, and sent to produce the same fruits of sanctification in the faithful of Jesus Christ?

What does this import to us, my Brethren? Does it not bring home to us our solemn responsibilities as priests and pastors of souls to labor assiduously and to the end of our lives in that particular portion of Christ's vineyard to which Church authority has assigned us: to strive by all means to sanctify the flock; nay, to expend ourselves and sacrifice our lives if need be, after the example of the Good Shepherd Himself in the interests of the flock committed to us? This consideration determines me to

address you, venerable and dearly beloved Brethren in Jesus Christ, on the duties of priests and pastors of souls.

Now, among the duties whose fulfillment makes the good pastor, I remark four principal ones—zeal to announce the truths of salvation; vigilance in watching over the spiritual interests of his parishioners; vigor, to prevent irregularities; and assiduity in the direction of souls, especially in the confessional, and in the training of the children of the parish.

2. The first duty of the good pastor consists in the zealous preaching of the divine Word. "I have appointed you, that you go forth and produce fruit—" and what is that fruit? It is, first of all, the knowledge of Christ's doctrine. "Go and teach," He says. It is by this means that His kingdom is to be propagated among men. For, as St. Paul says: "How can they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe Him of whom they have not heard? or how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent?"

This employment of preaching is perhaps the most difficult, the most delicate, the most dangerous in the Church. If there were question of only giving forth from the pulpit some select discourses, some choice passages, studied phrases, a play upon words, it would need only that one be somewhat of a talker; it would suffice even to have a good memory. But there is question of speaking with knowledge and unction; there is question of instructing, moving, touching, converting; there is question of melting the ice of the most hardened hearts; of breaking the

hardest rocks; of forcing impiety even in its strongest and most inaccessible intrenchments; of going with the torch of the word of God to seek the most abandoned sinners in the most frightful shadows of death, where they repose in tranquility. What talent is there not required? What life-long application? How many labors, studies, and watches? What power required in the discourses? What vehemence, what energy in words? What warmth of zeal? What purity of motive, so as to preach not one's self, but Jesus Christ and Him crucified: and to seek in all things His glory and the extension of His Kingdom among men?

3. It will need, then, shall we say, to be preachers of the first order: noted orators who cause themselves to be admired, as well by the justness of their expressions, as by the flowers of their eloquence.

Not so, my dear Fathers, the grace of the Saviour it not attached to a language which flatters the ear. The priest ought to be content with the talents God has given him; and it suffices that he leave nothing undone to cultivate the art of effective preaching according to all the means at his disposal. But at the same time a priest called to the government of souls ought to put forth all his efforts to fulfill the ministry of preaching. To this effect he must study with perseverance, and never say, I know enough. He must gather in the Holy Scriptures and in the works of the Fathers the celestial manna which is hidden there to nourish with it the people of God. He must saturate himself by meditation on those living and life-giving waters, to make them flow afterwards into the hearts of his hearers. He must, as a nursing mother, convert into milk the

more solid nourishment, those admirable sentences, those sublime thoughts with which the sacred books are filled, to nourish with them the most tender children of the Church, and whose stomach is fitted only for light nourishment.

Such was the conduct of the Apostles and of so many holy pastors who brought forth the faithful by their enflamed teachings. The word of God was in their mouth, now as a two-edged sword which separated the son from the father; the daughter from the mother; the friend from his friend; which broke inclinations the strongest and the most natural, in order to sacrifice to the Lord of the universe a liberty of which He was the Master; a sword, I say, which separated the miser from his riches; the voluptuous from the pleasures of the sense; and the most passionate men from the objects of their most ardent desires. It was now as a hammer which broke the chains of the most hopeless among the impious, and which gave them a charming and admirable liberty; now as a refreshing dew which caused to bud forth so many good designs, and ripened the precious fruits of a holy life; now as a voice resounding over the waters of the abyss, which arrested the fury of the storm; appeased the most violent tempests; and restored the calm of an amiable tranquility; now as a lightning which blasted the cedars of Libanus, and shook the desert of Cades: that is to say, the most powerful enemies of religion. What, my Brethren, the sacred Word, it is more feeble now than it was in former times? Why then does it not bring about the same effects? Whence comes it that after having preached entire years you scarcely see one conversion? Is it not because we weaken it by our worldliness and tepidity; like porous vessels which

cause liquors to lose all their strength and render them useless? Let us animate ourselves, my friends, and labor without ceasing to become apostolic men who announce with fruit the truths of salvation, and who practise ourselves what we preach to others. "Medice, cura teipsum."

SIXTH CONFERENCE—DUTIES OF PASTORS

Vigilance Over the Flock

1. The second duty of pastors is vigilance, and this vigilance must be the reflex of the vigilance of the Good Shepherd Himself. Now, what does our Lord say of His relations with His flock? He says, in St. John: (X, 14), "I know Mine; and Mine know Me." And again: "The sheep hear the Shepherd's voice, and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out—and He goeth before them, and they follow Him because they know His voice." This vigilance implies, in the first place, frequent visits of the pastor to the homes of his parishoners. How otherwise can he know them? And mark you, this knowledge is not in a mere social way, and is not come-by by spending long hours in their company; or by entering into their political or other schemes; or by giving ear to the small talk of the parish. A pastor's visit need occupy only a few minutes. The people will recognize in it an act of zeal for their spiritual interests, and the people generally are not slow in recognizing the purpose of the visit of their pastor, and in appraising it. They instantly recognize the difference between the true pastor and the

hireling—the spiritual man carrying out God's work, and the mere pleasure-seeker looking after his own material good.

In these visits among his flock he will soon learn how his parishoners stand in regard to their spiritual duties; whether they all go to Mass on Sundays; whether there are defaulters among them in regard to the reception of the Sacraments. He will learn whether the children are sent to the parish schools, and what supervision is kept over them by their parents; whether they are taught to join nightly in the family prayers, and to avoid the occasions of sin.

It was said of the Good Shepherd, that "He went about doing good to all." And so also it ought to be of the faithful pastor. There is a blessing in the visits of the priest to the homes of his people; and for this, if for no other reason: that he participates in the Priesthood of Jesus Christ. The people feel honored by recognition on the part of their pastor. Their Catholicity is warmed within them, and they are made more docile to his instructions. Oh, how many a time does it happen that a short pastoral visit brings to Mass and to the Sacraments a poor soul who was a stranger to the House of God and who had not been to the Sacraments for years. The pastor will have reason to feel in the depths of his heart the consoling conviction expressed in the words of Jesus Christ: "I know Mine; and Mine know Me." And, "My sheep hear My voice and follow Me." On the contrary, there is no greater curse that could come upon a parish than the faithless hireling who holds himself aloof from his people and never visits them or knows their wants, contenting himself with long social visits with a select circle

of special friends in whose company he squanders the precious hours that should be spent impartially among all the members of his flock. Such a pastor does not know his people as a pastor ought to know them, and does not bring forth the fruit expected of him by the Divine Master.

2. Among parishioners who have a special claim on the frequent visits of their pastor are the poor, the sick, and the afflicted. These suffering members of Jesus Christ are in need of greater attention than the others. The strong, the robust, the well-to-do have a sufficient number of friends, and they need little consolation. But the ones in need, the afflicted; how few to visit and console them! "The poor are nobodies," says the great Roman orator; and this is what called forth the saying of the Psalmist: "Tibi derelictus est pauper." "O, Lord," he would say, "the rich have many followers, have abundance of consolers and flatterers; but the poor, they are thrown over on Thee;" on the charity of the Church, which alone has an interest in them.

And how well repaid the true pastor who has a warm and abiding interest in his people, by their prayers and by their cordial love and loyalty. It is expressed admirably in the beautiful lyric addressed by the humble parishioner to his devoted pastor: "Soggarth Aroon." (Beloved Priest).

"Who, in the winter's night,
Soggarth aroon;
When the cold blast did bite,
Soggarth aroon;
Came to my cabin door,
And on the earthen floor,
Knelt by me, sick and poor,
Soggarth aroon?

"Who, on the marriage day,
Soggarth aroon;
Made the poor cabin gay,
Soggarth aroon?
And did both laugh and sing,
Making our hearts to ring,
At the poor Christening,
Soggarth aroon?

"Who, as friend only met,
Soggarth aroon;
Never did flout me yet?
Soggarth aroon.
And when my heart was dim,
Gave, while his eye did brim,
What I should give to him,
Soggarth aroon?

"Och, you and only you,
Soggarth aroon.
And for this I was true to you,
Soggarth aroon.
In love they'll never shake,
When for old Ireland's sake,
We a true part shall take,
Soggarth aroon.

III

SEVENTH CONFERENCE —DUTIES OF PASTORS

Constancy, Order, Method.

The third duty, or, shall I call it, series of duties of a pastor, is vigor.

This is shown especially in the constancy, order, and method, he employs in the administration of his parish—constancy in the conduct of the functions of his pastorate—method so as to perform them with efficiency and completion—and order so as to avoid confusion. These qualities are desired; for, otherwise, the affairs of the parish will fall into hopeless disorder. The pastor will see that the parish records are kept with unfailing accuracy and neatness. Names, dates, and circumstances, will be entered on the spot, when the record of a particular function is desired; and never is he to trust to memory for future entrance, but, at least, a note is promptly to be jotted down, to be transferred on the earliest opportunity to the permanent record. The same is to be done with regard to all parish receipts and expenses and monetary transactions of every kind. The Mass and other Church services will take place unfailingly at the appointed hour, and will be gone through with accuracy of rubric; so as to edify and instruct those taking part in them. The church the sacristy, the altar linen, the sacred vestments; everything about the church and its belongings will show forth a becoming reverence for God's house, and for the sacred functions that are carried on there, will show that the pastor, like the Psalmist,

"loves the beauty of God's house, and the place where His Glory dwelleth."

He will also exercise vigilance over the doings in his parish, will see as far as he can that there be no festering sores in the way of immoral show and dance houses, and customs which occasion the losing Mass on Sundays and festivals.

He will encourage the formation and organization of Catholic and religious societies; will promote the spread of Catholic reading, by having his church rack well stocked with good and edifying pamphlets and journals. And in this connection, I will relate a shrewd remark I once heard from a venerable prelate in Ireland. It was in the course of an address given at a conference of his clergy, and it was to the effect that whenever he visited a church he always took occasion to look at the book-rack, and he judged the pastor from what he observed there. If he saw it clean and well-stocked with Catholic literature, he judged that the pastor had the spiritual well-being of his people at heart. If, on the contrary, he saw either no book-rack at all, or one in which the booklets were soiled, and shabby, and in small quantity, he came away with the idea that somehow the pastor who had charge of that church failed in one of the most important duties of his pastorate, and that instead of feeding the flock committed to him with sound doctrine, he gave occasion for their souls' being poisoned with the false and corrupt literature of heretical writers.

Assiduity in Direction of Souls.

The last duty of the pastor that I will touch on, and I will be brief, is assiduity in direction, which is

chiefly exercised in the confessional, and in the teaching of the catechism.

Now, these are among the most arduous, as they are at the same time among the most fruitful and consoling of the labors of the pastor. There is surely nothing more wearisome than to be cooped up for long hours together in the confessional listening to the same sad tale of human frailty, told in every variety of detail, and every depth of sordidness and sin.

Here, too, the faithful pastor has need to keep his soul pure by the constant exercise of God's holy presence, and by prayer. For it is no easy task to be for hours in contact with sin, as confessors often are, and yet to preserve one's faculties clean and unsullied. And it is here that the priest has to say with the Psalmist: "Create a clean heart in me, O God; and renew a right spirit within my bowels."

But it is here also and especially that he discharges the office of the Good Samaritan, binding up the wounds of his people, and pouring upon them the oil and wine of grace and discipline after they have been waylaid and beaten by the infernal robber, and despoiled of their heavenly patrimony. To this office he must bring knowledge, and charity, and discretion, so as to act in the qualities of father, and judge, and teacher, and physician of his people, with light to distinguish leprosy from leprosy, and to minister to each one the remedy of his disease.

From the confessional he will pass to the schoolroom and impart to the little ones a knowledge of Christian doctrine, and himself will act the part of teacher and adviser.

To these duties are added others supplementary to them or included in them. He is to be found, at one time, in the sanctuary, like another Moses, with his hands raised in prayer for his people, all occupied, as they will be, with external duties; at another, as the Josue of the hosts of God, leading them against the enemies of our Faith, and through means of the Word, spoken and written, defending the doctrines of the Church; at all times he is to be the champion of morality and piety, with sling and staff laying low now the lion and the wolf, personated in the local scandal-giver, and again, the Goliath of an impious world, ever the sworn enemy of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Clothed in the panoply of learning and prayer, he is to exhibit to mankind the power and holiness of the man of God, to be a faithful distributor of the graces of Redemption, a zealous conductor of souls to the home prepared for them through the labors and sufferings and sacrifices of Jesus Christ, the Supreme Pastor.

FIRST PART

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—ADVANTAGES OF MEMBERSHIP OF A RELIGIOUS SOCIETY*

Special Graces.

1. In contemplating the great event that is to take place among you today, I am reminded of the blessing pronounced long ago by our Lord on Zachaeus, the chief of the publicans of Jericho. This man moved by an interior impulse of grace, conceived a longing desire to behold our Lord as He passed through the streets of his native city, and for this he was rewarded by the unexpected announcement from the Saviour Himself that He purposed to lodge and dine with him that very day. And our Lord, entering into his house and seeing his change of heart and his generous intentions with regard to the poor and those whom he had defrauded, pronounced on him His immortal words, which contained both a blessing and a prophecy: "This day, O Zachaeus, is salvation come into thy house."

You, my friends, who have received so gladly the grace of the Mission which these past few weeks we have been conducting among you, and with such an abundance of spiritual results, have by your generous acceptance of that grace, moved Him from whom cometh all good gifts to confer on you another and a still greater grace, and one whose effects, we trust, will last for all time; namely, the establishment among you of the Confraternity of the Rosary.

*Preached as a preparatory to the erection of the Rosary Confraternity in a parish.

It is proper on an occasion such as this to delineate for you who have not hitherto had a religious society among you, first, the advantages of membership of such a society; and, second, the special, I should rather say, the unique advantages accruing to those who are members of the Confraternity of the Rosary.

The general advantages of membership of a religious society I will try to expound for you now, while I will leave the exposition of the special advantages of membership of the Confraternity of the Rosary for another occasion later on.

As to the advantages of membership of a confraternity in general, they may be classed under the four following heads: First, special graces conferred by God on the members; second, the advantage of association of spiritual gifts and services; third, extrinsic helps to the overcoming of our weaknesses and passions and to the acquirement of Christian virtue; and, lastly, the blessing of the Church and her generous bestowal of indulgences.

2. That the Almighty confers great and special graces on the members of a religious society, we can infer from His usual way of dealing with us. When God opens up to anyone a new and privileged method of life; when He gives him a vocation for a special state to which He has not called all Christians, He invariably confers on such a one the graces belonging to that state—graces which will enable him to fulfill its duties with ease and perfection.

And a confraternity is a special society existing within the commonwealth of the Church, where the members are brought into a closer union of charity with one another than are Christians in general; where they are called to a closer imitation of Jesus

Christ; and where special duties are to be performed which the general body of the Christians are not called on to fulfill.

We can have no manner of doubt, therefore, that God gives special and great graces to the members of a confraternity that He does not confer on Christians in general.

Nay, and do we not see these graces acting and producing their glorious results in the souls of the members, even from the first day of their admission into the confraternity? Who that has any experience of a confraternity that has not witnessed the salutary change brought about in those who before were scandal-givers and the slaves of depraved habits? Who that has not seen the well-disposed advance daily towards the goal of high perfection? Who that has not witnessed the triumph of grace over nature even to the almost entire suppression of the ordinary failings of human nature, and the acquirement of a glorious state of virtue while still engaged in worldly occupations?

Dear brethren, I assure you as one who have had long experience in the charge of souls, that I do not know a more admirable means for the suppression of vice among a people, and for their advancement to a high and rare state of virtue than that of associating them as members of a religious confraternity.

Association of Spiritual Gifts and Services.

A second advantage of membership is the association of spiritual gifts and services. There is nothing more admirable in the teaching of our holy religion than the doctrine which tells us that the members of the true Church share in all the spiritual

gifts with which she is endowed, and that they have the power of benefiting one another by their mutual good works and satisfactions. These results follow from what is commonly known as the Communion of Saints. And, according to this doctrine, it follows, moreover, that the virtues and successes acquired by individual members redound to the advantage of all.

Being members of one another, according to the famous saying of St. Paul, the graces and virtues acquired by individual members become a sort of family possession, and the credit thus gained by them with God makes Him more propitious to the members of the Church in general, inasmuch as He sees in them the brothers and sisters of those who, by their merits become His special favorites.

And if this be so in regard to the Church in general, where the members form one great commonwealth; with greater reason does this doctrine apply to a religious confraternity where the bonds of fraternal charity are drawn tighter, and where the members form, as it were, a family within the Church whose spiritual interests are more closely interwoven than even in the Church itself.

See, my brethren, the unparalleled advantage of intercommunication of spiritual interests and services with a family such as is that of the Rosary, whose influence extends to the uttermost regions of the earth—with a family, many of whose members are raised to a high power and credit with God—with a family whose accumulated merits are handed down to us through a period extending over seven hundred years; and that has been through all that time associated to an Order of great merit in the Church, and

whose saints, according to the famous saying of one of the Popes, are "as numerous as the stars."

These are some of the advantages to be obtained by becoming a member of a religious confraternity, and, as we see, they are great and inestimable.

What remains for you then but to show your appreciation of God's benefit, in the first place, by having your names entered on the Roll Book of the Confraternity that is this hour erected among you; and then to prove yourselves worthy members by a faithful observance of its rules, by utilizing its advantages, and thus sanctifying yourselves, that you may obtain the reward of faithful members; which is, the blessing of God on yourselves and your families in this life, and membership in the book of life hereafter.

SECOND SERMON—ADVANTAGES OF MEMBERSHIP IN A RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

Extrinsic Helps to Holiness.

In my last discourse I pointed out to you some of the advantages to be derived from membership of a religious confraternity. One of those advantages, I said, was that by becoming a member one drew on himself the special blessing of God.

Another was the association of spiritual gifts and services among the members.

Let me point out to you one or two other advantages. And the first is that members have in a confraternity the aid of extrinsic helps to the overcoming of their weaknesses and passions, and

to the acquirement of Christian virtue. As to those extrinsic aids, let me say, that I look on them as among the very greatest that can be given to a soul struggling amid the temptations of the world.

These aids are the good example of fellow members; the frequent reminders to the performance of their religious duties; the assistance at the monthly or weekly meetings, as the case may be, where the word of God is announced and the results of united prayers are received from heaven; the frequentation of the Sacraments. All these and many other helps are provided for us as members of a confraternity.

2. Dearly beloved, when we remember how great is our forgetfulness of spiritual things, and our religious duties—when we remember how easy it is to discourage us in the performance of good and to throw us back into a life of despondency and unconcern for our spiritual well-being—when we remember our many frailties and our helplessness in the performance of spiritual good without the frequent intercession of extrinsic aids, we shall be led to an appreciation of those helps provided for us in a confraternity, and shall thank God for the crowning grace which His providence has this day introduced among us.

To me, who have been all my priestly life more or less in touch with the working of religious confraternities and have witnessed the great effects brought about in souls, mostly by the aid of those extrinsic helps, this day appears as one of the most blessed that has passed over you for many years. And if it were permitted to me to unveil for you the future, I would show you as the result of the proper use of those extrinsic helps, the lovely spectacle of

a regenerated people—of a people penetrated with the spirit of religion. I would show you the children of the Rosary gathered together at evening in every household in the parish and reciting in common the sublime prayer first given to the world by the Queen of Heaven herself, and which was the solace and stay of your sainted forefathers in the days of persecution. I would show you again every first Sunday of the month, those altar rails crowded with the same Rosarians who, with chastened hearts and pure consciences, come to receive their Sacramental God. I would show you once again the sweet odor of edification given by the members of the Rosary Confraternity to the inhabitants of all the surrounding districts, and this whole parish itself bloom like a garden with the rarest flowers of virtue. I would show you, finally, a state of society which would remind you of the former spiritual glory of our country where almost every parish rejoiced in the possession of its confraternity, and one of the greatest subjects for esteem was to be accounted a worthy child of Mary, the Queen of the Holy Rosary.

Indulgences.

But let me go on to the last advantage of membership of a confraternity such as that which is this day erected among you—and it is the participation by members in the indulgences of the church for the performance of divers duties connected with the confraternity.

Dearly beloved, just as a gift is a token of esteem on the part of the giver to the recipient of that gift; so, the concession of the indulgences of the church, which are so many spiritual gifts, to any institution,

is one of the ordinary marks of appreciation of the excellence of that institution by the head of the church, and a testimony as to its efficacy for the sanctification of souls. And if this be so, I think you are happy in the introduction among you to-day of the most highly endowed institution that ever existed in the Church from its foundation down to the present day.

But who shall measure the value of the indulgences granted? Let me say, that the power of granting indulgences is among the most priceless treasures purchased by Jesus Christ for His spouse at the cost of His sufferings and death; and that, after the power of forgiving the eternal debt due to sin exercised by the Church in the tribunal of Penance, comes the kindred power of releasing from the temporal debt due to the same sin by means of indulgences.

Dear brethren, how many and grievous are our daily sins; and if every sin must be atoned for with the utmost rigor, what an appalling debt do we not owe to Divine justice for the evil acts of a lifetime?

How, then, should we not appreciate the material kindness of the Church in giving us in such abundance, through our Confraternity, the means wherewith to pay off that overwhelming burden of satisfactions due to God for a life that has been one tissue of imperfections and sins, each of which must otherwise be satisfied for either here of hereafter?

Let me appeal to you, then, once more to give your names to this holy Association now established among you, and when you do join, be faithful in the fulfillment of its rules. Zealously bestir yourselves to

advance its interests, to enhance its works for the glory of God, and the sanctification of souls, whether within or without the organization.

THIRD SERMON—FALSE TEACHERS

"Beware of false prophets," etc. -(Matt. VII, 15.)

I

The Interpretation.

1. This instruction of our blessed Lord is taken from the third part of the Sermon on the Mount. Now, the Sermon on the Mount is a summary of the teachings of our Lord in the early days of His public life. It is made up of a series of sermons that were preached down in Galilee, a pastoral and agricultural country; and the Divine Teacher, as was His wont, took His figures from the objects His auditors were most familiar with. Here He represents false teachers under the figure of the wolf, but the wolf concealing the fierceness of his nature under the cover of one of the sheep, and for his own wicked purpose: to deceive and betray them.

2. Prophet in Scripture is a word from a Greek root, which means to announce or interpret; and it means a teacher. Those prophets God raised up among the Israelites from the beginning of their history. They were inspired by the Holy Ghost, even as were afterwards the apostles. It was the prophets' function to instruct the people, as preachers of God's word.

The difference between the prophet and the apostle

was, that the former foretold the future, and was the medium of revelation from God to man; whereas, the apostle was, as the name signifies, a messenger, or one sent to bear to mankind the revelation made by Jesus Christ.

But it is characteristic with the devil to ever try to counterfeit the works of God, and thus deceive men. Hence, he raised up in every age men filled with his spirit, the agents of his malicious designs. And they, recognizing their mission from him, usually put on his character of deception in order the more effectually to compass their evil ends. Our Lord points out this distinguishing trait to His hearers, by telling them that they came in the clothing of sheep, the most homely and amiable of animals, but that they were in reality ravening wolves, whose design was to slay and tear to pieces their victims.

And here, abruptly changing His figure, for He is speaking to simple peasants He convinces them in terms of another of their avocations, that of orchardists. "By their fruits you shall know them; i. e., to be the agents of the devil. For just as a good tree cannot produce bad and poisonous fruit; nor can a poisonous tree, sweet and wholesome fruit; so, neither can a teacher inspired by the devil, produce good results in the after life of those who imbibe his teaching; but a good teacher, good results; and a false teacher, evil results.

Is not this what we see in every age—the ravages wrought in society by false teachers?

Our Lord had special reasons for warning the people of His time and race against the fell results of false teaching, and false teachers. For, not only

did the scribes and pharasees follow Him everywhere, and contradict the good influence of His life and teaching; but He foresaw that immediately after His Crucifixion, and as the result of their rejection of Him, the devil would send a whole generation of false teachers among them, and lead them to utter destruction.

3. Our Lord goes on by a matchless force of oratory to sum up the results which ever follow from false teaching, in the concluding passage of His discourse. "Not everyone who saith to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he who doth the will of My Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." For the ultimate results of the teaching of false prophets is to lead their hearers to a false security as to their salvation, and to the making words take the place of deeds.

The Saviour tears to pieces any such assumption, and asserts for the hundredth time that salvation is to be gained only by the practice of virtue, and the leading of an austere, Christian life. It is the one method pointed out in all Scripture, and the one that brings home to us the stern truth, that "with fear and trembling, we must work out our salvation," and that "he only that perseveres to the end shall be saved."

4. In the last sentence of the discourse, He points further to the end of the false prophets themselves. For, He continues: "Many shall say to Me on *that* day," i. e., on the Day of Judgment, "Lord, Lord: have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and cast out devils in Thy Name, and done many miracles in Thy

Name?' And then will I profess unto them: I never knew you. Depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity."

II

The Application.

1. Such, dearly beloved, the interpretation of this famous text, and the objects immediately aimed at by our Divine Lord. But how applicable the whole passage to the teaching and the circumstances of our time. For, is not the world today full of false prophets; and do not those false teachers ordinarily come before the people whom they would deceive, in the clothing of sheep?

Who are the teachers of that pretended system of religion that covers the greater part of two continents, but wolves in sheeps' clothing? They promise the people salvation through reliance on an empty formula of faith and without the necessity of performing the austere practices of Christian virtue, and without the help of the Sacraments. See the sad moral condition of the peoples of those great countries, as the result of listening to their false teaching.

Who are the teachers of Socialism, and Bolshevism, and the other kindred economic and social systems, but false prophets who strip and despoil the people? See the starvation and despair at this moment among the dupes of Heywood, with his utopian republic amid the steppes of Russia; and the disappointment, and disillusion among the followers of Marx, and Engel ,and the other Socialist teachers, in every country of the Old and the New world.

Who, but false prophets, are the many doctrinaries who in our High Schools and Universities, teach material evolution which would deny the existence of God, the Creator? They rob the immortal souls of their pupils of the patrimoney of their faith, and would make of them the leaders of infidelity to the coming generation. See the fruits of their false teaching in the lawless and putrid condition of so many of the younger generation today. Who are the many shameless teachers, male and female, who go about the country ventilating their doctrines concerning birth control; and the emancipation of women from the lawful ties of matrimony; and the lawfulness of abortion by medical practitioners; and the subjection of peoples by wiles and force, in violation of the principles of justice; and the many other false systems imposed upon the world in our day; who are all these, but false prophets inspired by the father of lies to deceive and demoralize the people of this generation, and to ensnare them into the net of the devil?

And besides these many agencies of evil, how many others coming from a demoralized press; and the many immoral dance houses, and the disreputable movie shows, where whole generations of our youth of both sexes are swallowed down into the vortex of an immoral and dissolute life? What are those, but false prophets sent out in droves from the mouth of hell to tear and slay the people?

2. O Brethren, beware of those false teachers, men and women, and those detestible agencies of perversion, with which the world is flooded today. What could be the fruit of such teachings and such teachers, but that which we see around us in the de-

luge of immorality and crime that threatens to submerge society and bring on it the curse of an outraged God?

Beware of all such agencies and their insidious propaganda; and adhere to the one true organ of the Good Shepherd, the teachings of the Catholic Church. It is the sole agency created by Christ to be the teacher of all future generations; the one ark of salvation in the midst of the deluge of error in which the world is submerged.

Adhere to her teaching, which tells us that in one way alone is salvation to be found, viz., in the adherence to the principles of faith as inculcated by her; and by the practice of the Christian virtues. "He that doth the will of My Father who is in heaven; he, and he alone, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—THE EXCELLENCE OF THE ROSARY

The Vocal Element.

1. Among the forms of prayer handed down to us by the saints and recommended by the church's sanction and blessing, undoubtedly that of the holy Rosary holds a pre-eminent place. And this is shown not from its venerable antiquity, though according to writers worthy of credit, the Confraternity of the Rosary was the first of its kind instituted in the church, and it comes down to us with the accumulated merits of 700 years; nor from its popularity, though the Rosary is among the most widespread and popular of devotions, with the learned, with the simple, with ecclesiastics, with the laity; nor from the commendations of saints and popes who have eulogized it in every century of its existence; nor even from the privileges and indulgences granted to members, though the Confraternity of the Rosary is absolutely the most richly endowed society in the Church. But it is shown from the intrinsic excellence of the devotion itself, and from the sanctifying effects such a devotion must have on those who practise it.

What is then the excellence of the Rosary? To know the excellence of a thing, it is necessary to address one's self generally three questions: Where does it come from? What is it? and what is it for? In other words, in order to know the value of a thing it is necessary to know its origin, its essence, and its effects.

As to the first question, the answer is at hand; for

we have the testimony of all those whose opinion is worth paying attention to, to say that the Rosary was communicated to the holy founder, St. Dominic, by the Queen of Heaven herself. For, while the saint was despondent at the ill-success of his apostolic efforts for the conversion of the Albigensian heretics, and prayed with tears to her who is the Help of Christians, our Blessed Lady appeared to him, radiant with glory, and gave him the Rosary beads, saying to him: "Preach my Rosary; it will be a remedy against all those evils that afflict the Church."

And Dominic preached the Rosary of Mary, and his Order has never ceased to preach it after him; with what results a benefitted and grateful Church has never ceased to tell.

2. Let me come to the answer to the second question, which is the principal one, and say, that nothing can be more excellent than the Rosary as a method of prayer, whether we consider it as to the one or as to the other of its essential elements; namely, as to the vocal prayers of which it is made up; or, as to the meditation on the principal mysteries of our Redemption, which is made during the recital of the vocal prayers. Let me, first of all, take up the consideration of the former element.

The prayers of which the Rosary is made up are excellent on whatever side we look at them, be it in their simplicity; or in their origin; or in their signification; or even in their repetition.

Their simplicity cannot be doubted. St. Dominic chose for the matter of the Rosary the simplest prayers, those that the little child learns on the knees of its mother, those that the illiterate can learn without pain, those that remain in a man's memory, even

after he has trampled every other practice of religion under foot.

But whence do those prayers originate? Have those prayers so simple been composed by a man in a moment of fervor? No; they have come to us from the mouth of God Himself.

One day He who is called in Heaven "the Word," and whom, clothed in mortal flesh, we look up to as our Redeemer, was seated on the side of a road. Around Him pressed a crowd of the poor, the infirm, the ignorant. Extending His hand towards them, He said: "My dear little children, when you pray, do not as the Pagans, who put all their confidence in a multitude of words; who fancy they will be heard because of the number of things they say. But when you pray, say simply: 'Our Father who art in Heaven';" and the rest, as you know it so well. The rest of the prayers have not been taught us by Jesus Christ, but God inspired them to the angel and to the Church, and they surpass by their excellence all the effusions of the mind and of the heart of man.

3. But penetrate under the rind of the words that bloom upon your lips. Penetrate the signification of the prayers of the Rosary, and you will see their excellence and their deep meaning.

When you call God your Father, what do you do? Do you not confess the great dogma of the creation, and of the brotherhood of the human race? You say, "Father," to show your relations to Him, and you say, "Our Father," to show that you are in charity with all your brethren. You add, "who art in Heaven," to confess your hope of one day arriving there.

When you say, "Hallowed by Thy Name," don't you confess His infinite holiness? And when you demand His kingdom from Him, don't you confess the dogma of His sovereign royalty? That Kingdom refers to the law of grace He has established in your soul; to the holy Church founded by Him, over which His jealous providence has watched from the beginning; but, above all, to His glorious reign over the beatified amongst whom we hope to share happiness for eternity

When you petition that His will be done, don't you confess the dogma of His government over individuals and over all peoples; over that which is, and that which will be; that He is the Master of all space, and all time, and all things? When you ask your daily bread, don't you confess the dogma of Providence? You petition Him for the food which nourishes the body; for sustenance, for raiment, for lodging; for all those things that are necessary for our existence here below; for grace, which is the nourishment of the soul; but especially and beyond all, for the supersubstantial food of the Holy Communion, in which Jesus Christ feeds us with His own precious Body and Blood.

When you ask the pardon of your sins, don't you confess the dogma of mercy? And when you ask Him to deliver you from evil, don't you confess the dogma of grace?

4. When you say, "Mary, full of grace;" don't you confess her dignity? When you say, "Blessed art thou among women," don't you confess her privileges? When you bless the "Fruit of Her womb," don't you confess the dogma of the Divine Maternity, and the dogma of the Incarnation of the Word of

God? When you say, "Mother of God," don't you address her by the most glorious of her titles? and when you ask the succor of her prayers in life and in death, don't you confess the dogma of her intercession in heaven with her Son, and through her Son, with His Divine Father?

When you proclaim, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," don't you join the angelic throng in their adorations of the Blessed Trinity? And when you repeat the words of the Rosary again and again, don't you insist on these affirmations? don't you anchor them, so to speak, in your soul; so that it must needs be that one day or another they break forth by your mouth, and in your acts, and in your conduct: for the Christian cannot shut up in his heart the mystery of his beliefs.

Moreover, once we are happy in the possession of the formularies of our faith, we are delivered from all perplexity, from all incertitude as to our relations with God, and as to our eternal end, and there is given us the best aliment of our faith.

5. We repeat the words, not ten times, not fifty times, but a hundred and fifty times. But to what effect?

In order to fulfill the second condition to which Jesus Christ has attached the efficacy of prayer He has said that God will hear only the humble and persevering prayer—the humble prayer; that is, the prayer of the little one—the persevering prayer; that is, of him who is not wearied.

Well, I ask: in the prayer of the Rosary, what do we do if not repeat the self same petitions, even till we obtain them? Look at the little child that desires an object. The mother refuses to give it to him.

The child replies: "Mother, I long to have it." The mother does not answer. The child importunes: "Mother, give it then." The mother says: "Let me alone." But the child does not give up. He holds out his hand even till he gets the coveted object. So it is in the prayer of the Rosary. We repeat our requests of God, even till we get them.

We imitate in it, moreover, the prayer of Jesus Christ in His agony. He addresses Himself to His Father only by groans and lamentations, saying always the self same words.

O prayer suppliant; prayer universal; prayer divine in its origin; in its simplicity; magnificent in its signification! Prayer, humble, persevering, amorous, all conquering! Behold, what is the vocal element of the Rosary.

6. Take up this prayer, then, dearly beloved, and make it the favorite one of your life. Recite it every day, especially during this holy month of the Rosary. Through its efficacy God will shower blessings on yourself and your family. Your children will grow up in piety and virtue, "like olive plants around the table of the Lord," and will form your crown of glory in this world and in the next.

SECOND SERMON—THE EXCELLENCE OF THE ROSARY

The Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries.

1. In my former discourse I treated of the excellence of the Rosary as regards its vocal element, or the prayers it is made up of.

With your forbearance I will again return to the exposition of that excellence which I will prove from the mental element: that is, from the meditation on its mysteries. Now, nothing seems to me grander or more salutary in the way of prayer than this mental element of the Rosary.

Without doubt the prayer of the lips is good; but it is but the lower step of that mysterious way by which we mount towards God in order to unite ourselves to Him.

Above the prayer that speaks there is the prayer that thinks, that contemplates; the prayer that employs words as a support, even as the bird uses the flexible branch and its oscillations to take its flight towards heaven. Such is the Rosary. In it the soul contemplates the chief mysteries of our religion, and these mysteries the Church has arranged in three orders—the Joyful Mysteries, the Sorrowful, and the Glorious.

And, first, the Message of the Angel, the Incarnation of the Divine Word, and the first maternal transports of the purest of women. Then, the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth; that of the Saviour to His precursor. The Mystery of the Birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem; the maternal joys of Mary. The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple; the first revelation of His greatness to the heart of the true Jerusalem. The Finding in the Temple.

2. After joy, comes sorrow, for of this is life made up: some joyful days, and then, the clouds; the storms; suffering; and sadness. And, as Jesus Christ wished to represent human life in His own and that of His Blessed Mother; so, after joy for them, comes sorrow.

In these Mysteries the soul contemplates the prayer in the Garden of Olives; the agony and dark presentiment of Mary. The scourging, each blow of which falls on the heart of His Mother, and leaves there a mark as a bloody weal. The crowning with thorns: and the tears of Mary. The carrying of the Cross; Mary broken at the sad spectacle. The Crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ; and the deep sorrow that descends from the heart of the Crucified on the heart of His Mother, overwhelmed with tears.

3. Lastly, there are the Glorious Mysteries. As after joy comes sorrow; so, after sorrow, glory; triumphant glory, the reward of grief. Sorrow is the great combat of human life, and glory is the reward of combat. Behold the lesson of the Rosary. There is the triumphant Resurrection from the tomb, and the appearance of Jesus to His Mother. There are the Mysteries of the Ascension, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost, of the Assumption of the Virgin, received amid the acclamations of the celestial court; and her Coronation in heaven by the King of Glory.

Behold, dearly beloved, the principal mysteries of Christianity! You have often heard them mentioned. You have read them in the Gospels of the Sundays. And you have, without doubt, run over them many a time. You know them; but do you meditate on them? Do you make them in some sort enter into your soul? Do you receive the mysterious impressions of them?

Do you live by those Mysteries which are the aliment of the Christian life? Are you permeated with them; and are the lives of Jesus and Mary the model and the type of your life?

If not, then, take into your hand this chaplet of the Rosary. While your lips will be unceasingly occupied with holy words, you will follow in these mysterious regions the appearances of Jesus and His Mother, who present themselves to you in the virtues and privileges of their life.

II

It Develops in Us the Supernatural Life.

1. Our body has need of nourishment which it assumes and which renews its vigor. Our soul also has need of nourishment to live the supernatural life and so develop in it the fundamental virtues which have been infused into it in Baptism: Faith, Hope, and Charity.

We need to see the things of God; to approach the things of God; to be penetrated through and through with the things of God. We must know Jesus Christ; seize Him; embrace Him; become attached to Him; for this, He says, "is eternal life;" i. e., the principle from which eventuates eternal life.

How will the soul become attached to Jesus Christ, if it does not see Him; if it lives not in His familiarity? You will not know Jesus Christ, if you do not make Him approach to you; if you have Him not unceasingly before your eyes; if you consider Him not in His mortal Flesh, living for you, and dying for you on the cross; if you roll not back the stone of

sensible things under which He lies, and make Him live again before you by a vivid meditation on the mysteries of His mortal life. And all this you do by meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary.

2. To awaken Jesus Christ to a vivid life, there is no need to tap at the door of the tabernacle. When I enter into the church, I close my eyes; I join my hands; I recollect myself; and I run over in memory the sacred way traveled by the Son of God. I see Him descend into the sombre depths of the deep sea of our humanity, taking as a covering the veil of our flesh. I see Him in the Stable of Bethlehem; in the arms of His Mother; in the House of Nazareth; in His public life. I see Him in the Garden of Olives, covered with a bloody sweat. I hear during the night the blows fall on His sacred Body, which cause a river of Blood to flow for me.

I see, O my God, Your crown of thorns, Your adorable Face soiled with Blood and spittle, Your Body bent under the weight of the Cross. I see You upon Calvary extend your arms over the world as if to embrace it. I see You in the tomb. Then, ascending beyond the heavenly hierarchies, I see You seat Yourself at the right hand of Your Father. I see Your Mother crowned with glory. Behold what the Rosary gives me!

Is it possible that familiarity with these mysteries leaves me cold and determines me not to practise the virtues of which I have contemplated so long the example? How will not faith be deepened in my soul at the contemplation of those mysteries? How will not my hope be increased when I see this river of Blood flow upon the Cross for my iniquities? How will not my charity be increased when I recall that

Jesus Christ has so loved me and has suffered so much for me? Thus the devotees of the Rosary, when contemplating Jesus and Mary in the mysteries feel grow within them the virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

O brethren, contemplate these mysteries, not once or often, but every day, and many times a day. Accustom yourself to reflect frequently on one or other of them as suggested to you by the recitation of your Rosary. You will thus become familiar with the deep mystery underlying the earthly existence of the Son of God. Jesus and Mary will become your companions in life; your strong helpers in time of affliction and trial; your models in the practice of virtue; in a word, your salvation and sanctification in life, and your strong hope of salvation in the life to come.

THIRD SERMON—THE EXCELLENCE OF THE ROSARY

Its Mysteries Respond to the Phases of the Spiritual Life in Us.

1. I have already in two discourses shown you the excellence of the Rosary as a method of prayer. I have pointed out to you the excellence of the prayers of which it is made up. I have shown you the holiness of the mysteries it teaches you to reflect on, and how that reflection strengthens in us the virtues of faith, hope, and charity. Let me continue in this discourse to treat of the excellence of the same mental element coming from other considerations. And, first, the mysteries of the Rosary, joyful, sor-

rowful and glorious, respond to the phases of the spiritual life as experienced by each one—to infancy, or the period which belongs to beginners—to adolescence or progression—to the perfect state, or the consummation of the spiritual life. To infancy: when a soul is called by the goodness of God and visited by the graces of the Saviour, and when it has had the happiness of giving itself to Him; then He showers on it joys and caresses. He treats that soul as a mother treats her little child. This is the first phase of the spiritual life. But afterwards when the soul has become strong by the access of grace and the practice of virtue, God proves her fidelity; and to the first joy succeeds sorrow. But not even this is the ultimate state of the religious soul; for after sorrow, when she has suffered well; when God has torn her heart; when He has martyrized it; He makes her feel the delights of innocence. He draws the soul to Himself even till He loads her with glory.

In the meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary we learn how to conduct ourselves in joy, in sorrow, and in glory. In the joy of the soul, when we are happy, the meditation on the joyful mysteries will teach us not to rest in the happiness of a day, but to offer it to God and to rejoice in God and for God, and to expect that at a given moment which will not delay sorrow will arrive.

Again, the meditation on the sorrowful mysteries will teach us to bear suffering even to heroism for God's sake.

In glory we shall learn still how to conduct ourselves through meditating on the glorious mysteries, by despising human glory and greatness, and by re-

calling the greatness and glory that are reserved for us in Heaven. We shall recall still another thing, and it is, that Jesus Christ has been made great, and that He has made His Mother great, only by being generous in regard to us, and that after His example we ought to be generous also.

II

It Teaches Us to Combat Our Vices.

Again, the meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary teaches us to combat our vices. You know them. They are too well known to you to need that I repeat them. They are sensuality, the love of earthly goods, and pride; and they are found at the bottom of the human heart. Pride is the root of a multitude of excesses, and it is combatted by the Incarnation of the Word of God, who preaches humility to us. For he took the form of a servant, and for Mother He chose a creature. He submitted Himself to the laws of humanity, and He was made obedient, even to the death on the Cross.

The Rosary combats sensuality, because it preaches mortification in all the sorrows of Jesus Christ and His blessed Mother, and who could be a sensualist if he reflects often that he professes to be the follower of the Crucified? It combats the poison of cupidity for earthly goods; because Jesus Christ was made poor, and He remained poor. In His public life He had not a pillow on which to lay His head. He died naked on the cross, and He had to be buried in a stranger's tomb. We see all this, and we meditate on all this in the Rosary, and as a consequence we learn to detach ourselves from earthly

goods and to attach ourselves to Heavenly ones. Behold, my brethren, the excellence of meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary. Let us not stop, therefore, at the letter or the word, the vocal element; but let us penetrate to the living part, the mental. The external part is but as the covering of flesh and bones which God has thrown over the mysteries of His interior life.

III

Its General Effects.

My brethren, in speaking on the prayers and the meditations and the origin of the Rosary, I have spoken of its effects; because such a devotion of necessity raises us to the perfection of prayer; because it unites us interiorly to Jesus Christ and His Mother; because it approaches near to God and draws from Him many graces.

I will only add a few words. The Rosary produces more than any other devotion the glory of God; and more than any other devotion, it procures us the graces we stand in need of. This prayer procures the glory of God, of the august Trinity, so many times invoked and so many times saluted and adored, and in the confession of that fundamental dogma by the words: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." It procures the glory of Jesus Christ, saluted as Redeemer, as model, and as the type of creatures. It procures the glory of the Virgin, who is admired so often in its mysteries for her virtues and privileges.

And as to ourselves, the Rosary contains a multitude of mysterious graces, which God sends without

averting any one of them. There are, moreover, graces determined by the Church herself, and indulgences without number attached to the prayers of the Rosary. It procures the graces of succor and consolation in our need; of help for Christians who combat their passions; for generous Christians who sustain the cause of God upon the field of battle; graces of help and consolation for the Church, attacked unceasingly by her enemies; graces for the conversion of sinners. Oh, it is for them, above all, that the Rosary was instituted. With this weapon of peace Dominic triumphed over the Albigenses, and brought about their conversion in spite of their depraved obstinacy. With it innumerable souls were snatched by pious relatives from the jaws of hell, and

this when all other help seemed to fail. Practise it, then, all your lives, and be insistent in its practice, that you may know by your own experience its excellence as a method of prayer, and as a means for the attainment of all good.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—THE GRACE OF BAPTISM

I

"Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—(Matt. XXVIII, 19.)

"The Light of Our Soul."

1. In this simple formula we have announced the greatest of all mysteries, the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. It is a mystery of one God in three Persons: of a God enclosed in Himself; rejoicing in Himself; and alone sufficient of Himself.

It is in this mystery in particular that we ought to avow with the prophet, that He is "a hidden God." (Is. XIV, 15.) He is hidden not only from our eyes, but even from our mind; which can admire Him, indeed, but cannot comprehend Him. And since speech should proceed only from knowledge, we must keep silence on the mystery.

But while we remain overwhelmed with the might of this glory and this infinite Majesty, let us not forget the great obligations we owe to the Blessed Trinity, in the Name of whom we have been baptized. It is the duty of our ministry to make these known to you. For Jesus Christ in commanding His disciples to baptize the nations, ordained them at the same time to instruct them: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations," etc.

And do you know, dearly beloved, what is the grace of Baptism? And do you often reflect on the excellence of the gift that has made you Christians?

Consider, then, that it is called by one of the Fathers of the Church, St. Gregory Nazianzan: "The light of our soul; the change of our life into a better one; the reparation of our origin; and the greatest of all the gifts that God has given to men."

Yes, dearly beloved, those words: "I baptize thee" and those few drops of water that were poured upon your head the day of your Baptism are the greatest favor that God could confer on a creature. They are the principle of your predestination, the source of your salvation, and your eternal happiness.

Do not think that this is a mere rhetorical enunciation. It is a truth come out of the mouth of the Prince of the Apostles. "God," says St. Peter, "has given us through Jesus Christ a great and precious gift, a grace so great and precious that it renders us participators of the Divine Nature." (Pet. 1, 4.)

Can anyone go further than this? It follows from this that by the grace of Baptism we enter into society with the whole Blessed Trinity — Society with the Father, of whom we become the children; society with the Son, of whom we become the members; society with the Holy Ghost, of whom we are made the temples.

II

It Gives Us Society With the Father

2. I say, first, and this I shall treat of solely in this discourse, that through Baptism a Christian enters into society with God the Father, of whom he becomes the child. "Behold," says St. Paul, "you have not received a spirit of servitude and fear, (as the Jews) but a spirit of love and adoption, which gives

you power to say: "Abba"; "My Father." O my God, You are then our Father. You have adopted us into the Divine family. We are Your children by adoption. And if children by adoption; why, heirs also; heirs of the everlasting kingdom, and co-heirs with Jesus Christ. This is our quality, our being, our dignity, from the moment we become Christians.

In his epistle to the Ephesians the great Apostle says the same thing in other words. "He (God) predestined us to the adoption of children through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the purpose of His will."

Know you not, dearly beloved, what have been the designs of God, and what He has done for us from all eternity? He has chosen us by an effect of His good will to render us His adopted children in Jesus Christ, in such sort that as the Divine Word is the Son of God by nature; so are we by grace and adoption, and the choice of a mercy all gratuitous.

Who can comprehend so great a favor? I am not astonished if St. John, not finding terms sufficiently energetic to express himself, cries out: "Behold, O Christians; open your eyes; dilate your hearts; see." And what do you wish us to see, great Apostle? "See what love the Father hath for us, that we should be called, and should be, in reality, the children of God."—not only His children by denomination or comparison, but really, and in fact.

It is true this sonship is not visible to our eyes; but insensible as it is, it exceeds every other filiation. The child to whom you have given life is not so perfectly or so really your child, as you are a child of God by the grace of Baptism. In fact, as St. Paul says: The Divine Paternity is the ideal and

the model of all those that are on earth. And yet, blind that we are, of all qualities there is not one that people esteem less today than that of Christian.

Worldly people dispute even to fury over a grade of honor, or over a ridiculous preference. They pride themselves in a contemptible manner on the respectability of their birth; but as for the quality of being a child of God, they undervalue it so much as to be often ashamed of it in the company of His enemies.

How different with the early Christians? They preferred the glory of being the children of God to the greatest dignities in the world. "We glory," says St. Paul, "in the hope of glory of the children of God." "We are Christians," say they to the tyrants. "Behold our name, our quality, our profession." And we, my brethren, we despise a name so august, to borrow vain titles of honor which have worth only in the imagination of men.

Let us recognize our error. Let us acknowledge that the highest nobility that the world can boast of is to be ranked among God's children. We ought to be ready to sacrifice all things rather than lose this quality which is the first advantage that the grace of Baptism procures us.

SECOND SERMON—THE GRACE OF BAPTISM

I

It gives us society with the Son and with the Holy Ghost.

1. The second grace of Baptism is to render us members of Jesus Christ.

We distinguish two bodies in the Son of God; the one a natural one, the other a mystical one. The natural Body is that which He assumed in the chaste womb of the Blessed Virgin; a Body formed by the operation of the Holy Ghost; a Body formerly suffering and mortal, but now glorious and immortal, which He preserves on our altars, and which is crowned with splendors in heaven. The mystical body of Jesus Christ is His Church, of which we are the members; and Jesus Christ, the Head.

"He is the Head of the body of the Church," says St. Paul—a Head in whom reside all the graces which are communicated to us, and which flow continually on the children of the Church.

Now, it is to this Head that we have the honor of being united in Baptism, but with a union so close that when the Saviour speaks of it to His apostles, He says: "Do you know what you are, and what I am? My Father is in Me; and I am in you." I am the same as My father; and this union, although infinitely different, is nevertheless the model of that which is between you and Me." Is not this a subject for rendering to God continual thanks? We are nothing of ourselves; but by the grace of Baptism we are united so closely to Jesus Christ that we become the members of His Body; and, so to speak,

one Jesus Christ with Him. "Admire! rejoice!" says St. Augustine: "We are made Christ." "Oh, I am entirely transformed into God by this Sacrament," cries out St. Gregory Nazianzan; "I am a man become entirely divine. I am no longer myself; I am another. Behold me a new creature in Jesus Christ. He has placed in me a celestial being, in place of the corrupted being that I received from Adam. He has recast me to make of me a new vessel, and without employing any other fire than that of the Holy Ghost, He has given me a form altogether new."

Oh, happy state in which the grace of Baptism establishes us! What follows from this, my brethren? That having the advantage of being members of Jesus Christ, we ought to live in a manner worthy of Him. Let us not be dead and rotten members who deserve to be cut off from the Body; but members righteous and holy, united to the Body; living in God, and for God.

2. The third grace of Baptism, is to render us the temples of the Holy Ghost.

We can remark three kinds of temples where the spirit of God particularly dwells. The first, is the heart of God. The second is the womb of the Mother of God. And the third, the souls of Christians who are the children of God. I say more, with St. Paul: It is not only their soul, but even their body. "Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who dwells in you?" that your eyes, your ears, your mouth, your tongue, your hands, your feet, serve the Holy Ghost, and are consecrated to Him?

This mysterious consecration was made in Baptism. As soon as the Sacrament was conferred on you, the Holy Ghost descended invisibly into you. And whilst in former times He could not remain in man, because he was flesh, He now makes His abode in that flesh, regenerated by the waters of Baptism.

II

"The Bath of Regeneration."

1. Well, brethren, are you sufficiently instructed in this important truth? We read in the Acts of the Apostles that St. Paul, having met on the way to Ephesus some disciples of St. John the Baptist; he asked them whether they had received the Holy Ghost. No, they replied to him: We are not aware even that there is a Holy Ghost.

I know, my brethren, that we ought to speak to you otherwise than to the newly converted. However, if I entered into the house of many of those who hear me, and if I asked them: "Have you received the Holy Ghost in Baptism?" "Do you know well that you are His temples, and that He dwells in you by the grace of this Sacrament?" I greatly fear that many would reply to me: "We know not what you ask, as we have scarcely heard Him spoken of."

Alas, my brethren, in whose Name were you Baptized? Is it in the name of Peter, or of John? These are only feeble ministers. Although it may be they were saints, they pronounced only some words. They poured only a little water on your heads. They performed only certain ceremonies. Open the eyes of your faith. You will see that the whole Blessed Trinity came into you in your Baptism; that you are

become the children of the Father; the members of Jesus Christ; the temples of the Holy Ghost.

2. O favor without equal! God has chosen you, my brethren, from your birth to give you the grace of Baptism, without any merit on your part. When you came into the world the Heart of Jesus Christ was touched at your misery, and His adorable hands carried you to the sacred font; whilst His justice left millions of infidels in the mass of corruption.

As St. Paul says: "Not from the works of justice which we did; but according to His mercy He saved us by the bath of Regeneration."

Oh, what mercy! Do you reflect on it, my brethren? How many who are ignorant of this great favor, and who never think of it. Strange and criminal blindness! You know where your field, or your house, or your workshop is; and you know not what you are, and what the goodness of God has made you; that you are the children of the Father; the members of Jesus Christ; the temples of the Holy Ghost.

THIRD SERMON

BAPTISM—ITS NECESSITY

"Amen, Amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."—John III, 5.

I.

A Means of Salvation

1. In my last discourse I dwelt on the peculiar mercy of God to us in calling us to the Christian religion by means of Baptism. I pointed out to you the indelible character it impresses on our souls, and the privilege of intimate union with God which the Sacrament confers on us—that, in the words of the Prince of the Apostles, we are made by it "participators of the Divine Nature."

Let me impress on you today the importance, the absolute necessity rather, of the Sacrament as a means of salvation. "Baptize all nations," says our Lord. Note that He chose the supreme moment of His last discourse before His Ascension to solemnly promulgate the law of Baptism, and to inculcate its necessity for the attainment of eternal life. It was not, indeed, on this occasion that He constituted it a Sacrament, but three years previously, when Himself was baptized in the Jordan by St. John the Baptist.

We know from the Gospels that He sent His disciples to baptize the people even during the time of His public mission. But not till now did He make the reception of Baptism a universal law. As to what necessity that is, He Himself has taken away every shadow of doubt. "Amen, amen, I say to you"

He says, "unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."

He has not constituted the same necessity for the reception of the other Sacraments. One may be saved who has not received Confirmation, and who does not intend either explicitly or implicitly to receive it. We are not bound under penalty of forfeiture of heaven to receive the Holy Eucharist, or Penance, or the other Sacraments. But we have here the word of Truth Itself assuring us and confirming that assurance with a most solemn oath that unless a man be regenerated by Baptism, he can never enter the Kingdom of God.

2. Now, Baptism was instituted primarily for the blotting out of original sin. For, as you all know, by reason of the disobedience of our First Parents, all their posterity lost original justice, "being made unclean," as the apostle says, and "by nature children of wrath." The gates of heaven were closed against us. Nor could we again be reconciled with God until the Blood of His only Son should stream upon us from the Cross.

And, as the Council of Trent tells us, "although our Redeemer died for all, not all receive the benefits of His death, but those only to whom the merits of His Passion are applied. For, as men, unless they had been born, propagated from the stock of Adam, would not have been unjust; so, unless they be born again in Christ, they can never be justified; since by that regeneration through the merits of His Passion grace is given them by which they are justified. Christ then died for all men, and by His death He merited the Redemption of all. But He willed that

the Sacraments be the ordinary channels of grace by which the merits of His Passion be applied to our souls. This is primarily and most necessarily the case with Baptism, which is the gate that opens into His Church, and to the reception of all the other Sacraments."

Baptism, then, being necessary for all, it was becoming that its Institutor should have left on earth ample facilities for its administration, and this He has done. For, although by His command to His apostles on this occasion He constituted them and their lawful successors, the bishops and priests to the end of time, the ordinary ministers of the Sacrament; yet, in case of necessity, anyone can administer it.

II

The Matter and Form.

Now for the valid administration of any Sacrament, besides the minister who performs the rite, two things are necessary to which the theologians have given the names of matter and form. The matter or element is something which by the appointment of our Lord has received power to impart grace, and which is significant of the effect produced in the soul of him on whom the Sacrament is conferred; and the form is a set form of words determining the matter to produce the Sacramental effect. Thus, in Confirmation, the matter is chrism, or a mixture of consecrated oil and balm, which is applied by the bishop to the forehead, and which is significant if the spiritual strength conferred by the Sacrament to fight bravely in the cause of Christ;

and the form, are the words pronounced by the bishop in the application of the chrism.

In the Holy Eucharist, also, bread and wine were constituted the matter of the Sacrament; and the form are the words of Consecration pronounced over them by the priest, and which are none other than those our Lord made use of at the Last Supper when He consecrated bread and wine into His own most precious Body and Blood.

So also in the Sacrament of Baptism, there are the matter and the form. The matter of Baptism is water. Remark that no other liquid will do but only water, according to the words of our Lord: "Unless a man be born again of *water* and the Holy Ghost, he can never enter the Kingdom of God." And the form of Baptism are those words taught by the Church, and handed down from the days of the apostles: "I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," with the intention of doing what the Church does, or intends. It is necessary to be very exact, as the omission of even one word may mutilate the sense, and so invalidate the Sacrament.

Bear in mind also that the water is to be poured on the head, and not on any other part of the body; and this for the reason that the head is the seat and centre of the sensible and intellectual faculties, the citadel of the soul, which is to be regenerated by the Sacrament. And in administering the Sacrament it is proper, though not strictly necessary, that the water be poured out three times, and in the form of a cross, pronouncing in the meantime, the words: "I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

III

Practical Information.

In connection with this, there is another thing that I would like to inform you of, the ignorance of which causes, alas, the loss of many precious souls. It is,or, at least, it has been a common belief that infants who come to light before their time, stand in no need of Baptism, because, forsooth, the soul is not infused into the body till near the full time of parturition. Now let it be known to you that according to the common opinion of theologians in our days, which opinion is borne out by the experiments of scientific men, the soul is infused into the body of the infant at conception. Such presumably being the case that soul is already tainted with original sin, and consequently has need of Baptism; and were it by any mischance to die, it would be lost eternally; it would never attain to eternal life with God. Therefore, while there is any sign that such an infant is yet alive; or, rather, unless it shows unmistakable signs of death by putrefaction or otherwise, it should be baptized, at least conditionally.

Another thing that eminent medical men inform us of is, that the number of infants who are born at such a period that they cannot live is in the proportion of one to every eight or less that are conceived. Were you then rightly informed, you, mothers and fathers, and all you to whom the knowledge of those things is most necessary, how many souls redeemed by Jesus Christ now defrauded of their birthright to the enjoyment of God, could have been saved.

Take home this knowledge with you, my dear

brethren, and if occasion should offer, be sure that no soul shall be lost through your fault. An infant is capable of Baptism from the instant that the soul is joined to the body. This union probably takes place at the moment of conception. Through the many accidents of life, the eternal salvation of such souls is endangered. No infant that dies without Baptism can be saved. "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he can not enter into the Kingdom of God."

It behooves all, finally, to know the proper matter and form of Baptism; to know how to administer the Sacrament validly and becomingly, and reverently. You are to pour water on the head of the person to be baptized, saying at the same time: "I baptize thee, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—THE SANCTIFICATION OF SUNDAY

"And it came to pass, when Jesus went into the house of one of the chiefs of the pharasees on the Sabba'th day to eat bread, that they watched Him. And behold, there was a certain man before him that had the dropsy. And Jesus answering, spoke to the lawyers and pharasees, saying: 'is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day? But they held their peace. But He, taking him, healed him, and sent him away. And answering them, He said: 'which of you shall have an ass or an ox fall into a pit, and will not immediately draw him out on the Sabbath-day? And they could not answer Him to these things." (Luke XIV, 1-6.)

I

Preliminary Study.

It is easy to see that the scruples of these pharasees concerning the cure of this poor dropsical man on the Sabbath-day were unfounded. For, God in forbidding servile works on the Sabbath-day did not intend to forbid works of charity. On the contrary, the performing of works of charity makes part of the sanctification of this day; and it was only by a gross abuse that a good part of the Jews were content to pass the day in idleness and pleasure.

Nevertheless, the question of our Lord may be made useful to us, if only it stimulate us to reflect on the things that concern the sanctification of the Christian Sunday.

To this effect, and as a commentary on the Gospel I have read for you, I purpose to devote my discourse today to this important subject.

And, first, let me premise by calling your attention to a surmise among the learned that seems to be well founded; and it is, that the precept commanding the sanctification of the Sabbath-day comes down by primeval tradition from the creation of the world. One reason among others for this surmise is the fact that among the ruins of the ancient cities of Assyria and Chaldea two sets of tablets at least; that is to say, two books written on baked clay, and going back in their originals to a time anterior to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai by 500 years; two sets of tablets at least have been recovered, in which a reference to a seventh-day religious observance among those ancient Semitic peoples seems to be indicated. Now, this can point to nothing else than a tradition coming down through Noah from the antediluvian patriarchs and Adam — a tradition indicating that from the creation God demanded from man that one day in seven be devoted to his service and worship. The very words of the Commandment prescribing the sanctification of the Sabbath-day confirm this surmise. For, unlike all the other Commandments, it commences with the important injunction, 'remember'; as if to indicate that it was already a recognized ordination, but that there was danger of its falling into desuetude; and the word Sabbath-day is used without introduction or explanation of any kind, as of a long-established and well-known institution.

Let me further say, what is not generally recognized, that our Sunday does not in all respects re-

spond to the Jewish Sabbath-day. The one was of divine institution, being part of the ceremonial law of the Jews; and as such was allowed to fall into desuetude by the apostles; the other is of ecclesiastical origin, being made a general precept of the Church not many centuries after the founding of Christianity.

But although the precept concerning the Sunday's observance be of ecclesiastical institution; and though the secondary motive of the precept be different from that of the Jewish one; yet it may be looked upon as a substitute for the latter, and as, in a general way, modeled on it.

Servile Works Forbidden.

1. This being stated, I say that there are three things that prevent the due celebration of the Sunday: First, servile works which go against the letter of the precept commanding the Sunday's rest; second, sinful works, which go against its spirit, which forbids libertinage on this day; and third, idleness and excessive diversion, which go against its end, which is, that the day be spent in works of piety and religion.

I say, then, that servile works prevent the due celebration of the Sunday, and I shall content myself with proving this in this discourse.

Taking the precept in its literal sense, we find that it obliges us before all things to cease from our accustomed works, particularly those that are called servile.

The law is formal. "Thou shalt do no servile work on that day." And in order that we might know

more distinctly what are the servile works, here is how the precept is enjoined in Scripture: "Six days of the week you shall do all your works; but the seventh, which is the day of rest consecrated to the Lord your God, you shall not work; neither you, nor your sons, nor your daughters, nor your servant man, nor your maid, nor the animal that belongs to you, nor the stranger that is within your gates." And He gives the reason: "Because the Lord in six days did all His works, and He rested on the seventh: and it is for this reason that He blessed this day, and commanded you to sanctify it."

Never was law couched in clearer terms, and never did lawgiver give a better reason for its institution. And that reason is, that as by laboring during six days of the week we imitate the conduct of the Almighty who created the universe in six days; so also, we follow His example by resting on the seventh. And His wish is, that between the Sabbath of the Lord on which He rested from His works, and the eternal Sabbath of Heaven, there be a temporal sabbath formed on the idea of the one and the other.

2. A second reason for the law of the Sabbath rest is given in the book of Deuteronomy; and it is in order to keep forever in the minds of the Jews the remembrance of their deliverance from the slavery of Egypt. And in order that the memory of that great event might never be forgotten by them the Almighty commanded, not only the solemn celebration of the Pasch to be held every year, and the prodigy to be inscribed in the annals of their nation; but also the solemn celebration of the Sabbath-day by the whole Jewish people.

This reason has been supplanted in Christian times

by another and greater one, namely, to commemorate the deliverance of the whole human race from the slavery of the devil, of which the Lord's Resurrection from the dead, which took place on this day, is at once the type and the assurance.

3. The Lord and His Church have commanded dearly beloved. It is our duty to obey. And it is not permitted to anyone without a grave reason to dispense himself from the precept. For, if it was forbidden to the Jews to do any servile work on the Sabbath-day, that they might solemnize in peace the festival of their deliverance; what obligation have not we, Christians, to abstain from those works, to honor the Sunday which is the commemoration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and of our Redemption.

Let us here deplore the impiety of those Christians who are amongst us, and they are not a few, who scandalously and audaciously violate this venerable ordination, and who are not ashamed in the presence of pagans and unbelievers to be seen working publicly and unnecessarily on Sundays. These are in a pre-eminent way scandal-givers, and as such they deserve the indignation and contempt of the whole people whose religious sentiments they outrage. And for ourselves, dearly beloved, let us take care to hold in honor this venerable ordination of the Church by abstaining scrupulously from all unnecessary servile works, and God will bless and make fruitful our labors. He will, moreover, sanctify our lives and enrich us with the goods of eternity.

SECOND SERMON—THE SANCTIFICATION OF SUNDAY

I

Sinful Works Forbidden.

1. In my former discourse I pointed out to you the first way in which we are to honor the Lord's Day; and it is by the abstenance from all unnecessary servile works.

But it is not enough that we abstain from servile works on Sundays. We must abstain from sinful ones which are more offensive to God.

If we are to believe St. Augustine, one of the grossest illusions of the Jews was to content themselves with keeping the law according to the letter which, as Scripture says "killeth"; and to give themselves little trouble to observe it according to the spirit "which giveth life." Attached to the carnal sabbath on which carnoral works should cease, they neglected the spiritual one in accordance with which works of sin were forbidden them; and many availed themselves of the Sabbath-day as a time to give themselves up to unlawful pleasures.

This, I say, was a gross illusion; for, if servile works are unlawful on the Sabbath-day, how much more are not sinful works? And this for two reasons: First, because sinful works are servile works, according to our Lord, who says that "he who committeth sin, is the slave of sin." And who shall say if servile works, which otherwise are innocent and to be commended, interfere with the sanctity of the Sabbath-day; that sinful works, which are intrinsically evil, do not? and secondly, because sinful works

committed on this day are a profanation and a sacrilege; since they dishonor a time specially consecrated to the solemn worship of God. Can we, brethren, can we clear ourselves from the reproach of a like disorder?

Far be it from me, dear brethren, to make a general charge of impiety against a religious people. Rather would I say, in the words of St. Paul to the early Christians of Rome: "Your piety is known to all men."

But yet, we know, and we cannot deny it, that there are many among us who profane the Sunday by the commission of sin. How often, for instance, when passing along our streets on a Sunday evening do we not come across that wild beast in human form, the drunken man? Yes, men are to be found who would be offended if they were not looked upon and treated as good Catholics; and yet, they think nothing of getting drunk on Sunday evenings and of spending their week's earnings in extravagance and debauchery; thus offending God grievously, and often reducing their families for the following week to a state of destitution. Are not these profaners of the Sunday; and do they not bring the Lord's day into derision by their profanity and debauchery?

And when I speak of the evils of drunkenness and disorder on Sundays, I by no means exempt from blame those who take advantage of the law permitting the sale of liquor on Sundays to make their houses very hells by their indiscriminate sale of drink to all comers.

Dearly beloved, the license to sell drink throws at all times a great responsibility on the proprietors of such houses, and the liquor business is a danger-ous

one at best; since by the least weakness to drunkards, or by the least want of discretion in giving drink to those who ask for it, they become co-operators in the neighbor's sin. Woe then to the proprietors of those houses where drink is served indiscriminately to all comers! For, those who do thus, are accountable before God for the many temptations they put before the weak, and for the sins committed by drunkards in their liquor. And these, I fear, are not a few. For, how otherwise explain the presence of so many drunken people one meets and who make family life hideous with their drunken brawls and follies?

2. Another practice that profanes the Sunday is that of young men and women holding dangerous intercourse on Sunday evenings. Now, I spoke on another occasion of the practice of company-keeping, and I denounced it as one of the most fruitful sources of sin that we are acquainted with, as a practice that works havoc with the virtue of thousands of our young people of both sexes. So fatal to virtue is the habit of company-keeping that those who are addicted to it are generally suspected of immoral practices; and with good reason, considering the strong tendencies to impure indulgence inherent in us all; a tendency that we control only by taking the greatest precaution, and with the help of God obtained through prayer. What then are we to think of those who wilfully frequent the occasion, where without a miracle from God they could not remain unscathed, and where the very act itself of company-keeping is often a mortal sin against chastity? As to the time, let me only say, that the passions kept under restraint by worldly concerns

during the week, like trampled weeds, spring up afresh on Sundays by reason of the leisure given.

I appeal then to you, parents, and heads of families, to see that you faithfully discharge your duty of watching over the conduct of those under your charge, and see that they be not allowed to take up with dangerous companions, when they go for their recreation on Sunday and other evenings.

II

Idleness and Excessive Diversion Forbidden.

There is a third practice, which though it be lawful and innocent when indulged in in moderation, has become a real abuse by over-indulgence; and it is that of spending the greater part of the Sunday in sports and long excursions, to the complete disregard of the end for which the Sunday was instituted. Now, (and I want it to be well understood; for, the Church in her efforts for the Sunday's observance is guided by no narrow puritanical spirit), the law of the Church does not forbid a moderate diversion on Sundays; particularly to those who are hard-worked on the other days of the week, and who have only the Sunday for enjoyment in the company of their friends. But this is the evil of which I speak: that many are so taken up with their sports and pleasure parties that they scarcely think of performing a single act of prayer or piety on the day consecrated to the solemn worship of God. Nay, what is more to be deplored is, that many, and those I fear are a growing number, do not hesitate to sacrifice attendance at the Sunday's Mass commanded them by the Church, rather than forego their wanted pastime.

Dear brethren, let me remind you that the end of the Sunday's rest is not diversion, however innocent it may be in itself, or otherwise allowable. It is rather to give leisure for the more assiduous worship of God, and the more serious attention to the soul's needs. And a hurling match, or a football match, or a picnic, or an auto ride, or other amusement that takes up the whole day, defeats the end of the Commandment which is that we keep holy the Sunday.

III

The Sunday Horarium.

How then, you will ask, are you to spend the day in a manner pleasing to God and worthy of a Christian people?

Well, here is a general summary of the acts that, as a rule, should fill the day, as recommended by the saints, and as practised by devout Catholics in all countries and ages.

1. At rising let your first duty be to kneel down and say your morning prayers devoutly; taking care to thank God for the benefits of the past week, and to offer Him the fruits of the one that has commenced.

2. Prepare to attend devoutly at Mass, as commanded by the Church; at which you will, if possible, receive Holy Communion. And if you can make a choice, assist at one at which you will hear the word of God propounded to you.

3. During the day, spend some time in pious reading with your friends, and in the recitation of some special prayers, to which you will accustom yourself on those days of greater leisure.

4. Practise some work of mercy if within your reach, such as the visiting of the sick, or the instruction of the ignorant in religious knowledge.

5. At evening be present at the devotions in some church, that you may receive the Holy Benediction of our Lord, and receive strength for the labors and trials of the week to come.

6. At night, before retiring, say your accustomed prayers, especially the Rosary, in company with your family.

With all these exercises of piety there will be still long hours for leisure and amusement. By their practice you will procure for yourselves real happiness, the blessing of God during life, and treasures of merit hereafter, to be laid up for you in the eternal Sabbath; where you will rest in the bosom of your God in unending peace and glory.

THIRD SERMON—THE SANCTIFICATION OF SUNDAY

"*Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day.*" —*(Exod. XX, 1.)*

I

The Sunday's Rest.

1. Although God by His immensity fills the whole universe with His presence, yet He has wished to reserve to Himself our churches wherein He demands in a special manner our homage. And so, in like manner, although He fills all time by His eternity, yet He has marked out certain days which should be

specially consecrated to Him, and those days He wishes should be sanctified by devoting them to works of piety and religion.

It is true that we owe to God all the moments of our lives, and that all the days of a Christian ought to be days sanctified by holy practices, and one might imagine that it would be a slight advantage to learn solely to sanctify certain days scattered over a life which ought to be all holy. But, no, my brethren, the sanctification of those days of benediction cannot fail to have an influence upon all the days of our life; and whoever will make it a rule for himself to keep holy the Lord's day will in a short time acquire the happy talent of sanctifying all the others also.

This day, dearly beloved, which you celebrate in a spirit of submission to the Commandment of God—this day which has suspended your labor, and which has brought you together in this church has been sanctified from the beginning of the world; and the Almighty had no sooner regulated the course of the stars than He set Himself to regulate its observance and its destiny.

He gave sanction to the law of the Sabbath by His own conduct, since after having given us during the six days of creation the example of labor to which He subjects us; on the seventh, He gave us the example of repose which He commands.

2. Now the Commandment of suspending our works on Sunday might perhaps appear to some childish and superstitious, and one might ask, what has the movement of our hands to do with the Almighty? Can He be offended at a thing so indifferent—often, indeed, so praiseworthy, as labor? Yes, undoubtedly He can, my brethren; He can be offend-

ed; since He regards it on this day as a crime worthy of death. This the old law makes known to us expressly. "Whoever," says the command of God, in the Book of Exodus, "Whoever shall violate the rest of the Sabbath day; let him die the death." (Ex. XXXI, 14), and conformably to this law a man was stoned, even by the particular judgment of God Himself, for having been surprised during this day in an occupation which could appear not only permissible but necessary. Now, could God declare Himself more emphatically in favor of this law than in putting it in the balance with a human life and judging that it ought to outweigh.

3. But the Almighty rests not here, and that He may authorize this law He does something more astonishing. During the time that He fed His people in the desert, whereas, He sent them on week days a certain quantity of manna exactly proportioned to the wants of each family, and each individual in particular, the quantity was found doubled on the eve of the Sabbath—and this He did in order that the people, provided with all that was necessary for the day following, might not have occasion for even bending their body or stretching their hand to gather the present from heaven. Thus, on the day that preceded the Sabbath a miracle reminded the Jews to what a degree the Lord was jealous of the observance of His law, and how He reprobated a labor of which He judged proper to take from them even the least pretense, by a multitude of prodigies.

4. If you ask why punishments so severe and precautions so wonderful, I reply, that there is always a great distinction to be made between the law itself and the thing commanded or forbidden by

that law. The thing commanded may appear trivial and indifferent in itself; but the law itself is never so. What was in the object that called for the prohibition made to Adam to eat of the fruit of the tree of Knowledge? Nothing. But it became great and considerable by the commandment, because the commandment was formal; because it came from a Master who ought to be obeyed. I say the same thing of a thousand other laws, and in particular of that which forbids labor on the day consecrated to God. The thing forbidden may appear light, but it becomes great by its prohibition, since the law that prohibits it in some sort comprises in itself all the greatness and all the authority of Him who imposed it, and by consequence makes a crime of the disobedience which contradicts it. "Remember, then, that thou keep holy the Sabbath day," and sanctify it, in the first place, by resting from all servile works.

II

Spiritual Activity.

1. But if God forbids servile works on Sundays, He by no means condemns you during this day to an idle and unprofitable repose. Our rest ought to be modeled on that of God Himself.

When God rests from His great works, He is not idle; He remains not in indolent inaction. If He ceases to operate externally, He is taken up with interior occupations that concern the welfare of the universe. He revolves continually His designs of mercy and justice. He marks out the destiny of the just and the wicked. He prepares graces for all men. He designs crowns for the elect; salutary

chastisements for sinners; desperate punishments for the impenitent. The rest of the Lord is then a laborious rest, and as different from idleness as even labor itself.

It is a like rest that God demands of us. He forbids us labor of the body, only that we may occupy ourselves with that of the soul alone. Such a rest, I say, is not idleness. It is not idleness to give one's self up to converse with God. It is not a small occupation to contemplate the greatness of the Almighty. What an object, my brethren, to explore, to meditate upon! Here relations vast and varied offer themselves to our first gaze. Here is an untiring source of reflection and sentiment. He is a Creator whom we ought to adore. He is a Master whom we are bound to serve. He is a Father whom it is bliss to love. He is a judge whom we must hear. He offers us graces which we must ask. He proffers us crowns which we are to merit. He gives us laws which it is our duty to obey. He makes threats which we ought to fear. He sends us chastisements which we ought to profit by. If we contemplate the mysteries of His greatness, we shall be humbled by them; the marvels of His power, they will astonish us; the resources of His providence, we shall be struck by them; the strokes of His justice, they will fill us with terror; the effects of His justice, of His mercy, of His goodness, we shall be touched by them.

Fear, love, respect, admiration of the divine perfections ought to fill up all the moments of that mysterious rest of the Sunday, which is, to speak properly, only the repose of the body, but which

ought to be looked on rather as the true occupation of the soul.

2. Is it thus that you fill in the Sunday, my brethren? Alas, there is not, perhaps, a day in your life in which you are more idle or more vainly occupied than during the day consecrated to the Lord. Gross and sensual like the Jews, we think we have done much for God by suspending labors painful in themselves, and which we detest perhaps the subjection to. And by what occupation will they be replaced?—those works the sacrifice of which costs us so little. They will be replaced by dull and tedious conversations in which many say things that should never have been thought of. They will be replaced by idle visits and amusements in which God or things that have relation to Him are scarcely thought of, perhaps not tolerated.

And, would to God, they had contented themselves with even spending this day in idleness; but delivered once to this mother of all evil, do they content themselves with rendering the Lord's day sterile of virtue?

Do they not, on the contrary, render it fruitful of libertinism and sin? The passions trodden underfoot on week days by labor, wake up to fresh strength during the idleness of Sunday; so that this day, instead of being sanctified by holy duties, becomes for them a day of profanation and of scandal. One scruples to work on a Sunday, and he thinks nothing of spending the day in gambling and debauchery. Another, who carries himself respectably during the week days, is not ashamed to spend the Sunday evening in the saloon, and to be seen publicly drunk

on the streets, cursing and quarreling with his neighbors and family.

It is on those days particularly that young men and women keep unlawful company, give loose reins to their passions, and deliver themselves up to all the works of lust and crime. Thus it is that the Lord's day becomes for them a day of sin, a day to be devoted to revelling and hellish orgies.

3. I will ask you, dearly beloved, to redouble your efforts to propitiate God for the injuries done Him by sinners, especially on Sundays, by their crimes and shameful excesses. And for yourselves, try to carry out the ordination of God, so that this day be devoted by you in accordance with His will to works of piety and religion; that thus you may sanctify your own lives, edify your neighbor, bring blessings on the Church, and glorify and thank the Almighty the Giver of all good gifts, for His blessings, and merit a continuance of them, even the crowning grace of final perseverance.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—LOVE OF THE NEIGHBOR

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up, tempting Him, and saying: 'Master, what must I do to possess eternal life?' But He said to him, 'What is written in the law? How readest thou?' He answering, said: 'Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.' And He said to him: 'Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live'."—(Luke, X, 25-28.)

I

God's Providential Disposition.

When our blessed Lord was asked by this lawyer, which was the great Commandment of the law, He did not content Himself with answering the question put Him, but took occasion to point out another commandment concerning which He was not asked, and which He would have us consider as coming next in importance to the one that was the subject of inquiry. "The greatest and first Commandment," says He, is this: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul, with all thy mind and strength"; and the second is like the first: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

As the precept of the love of the neighbor embodies in itself a great part of the moral duties a life of piety calls on us to practise, I think I cannot employ myself better in this discourse than by treating of this great subject.

And now I will ask you to observe that Almighty

God, having created us to live in one another's society, has been pleased to unite us by very strict ties. He formed us to His own image and likeness. He caused us all to descend from the same original stock, from the same father and mother. He redeemed us by the same Saviour; He called us all to the same faith, the same religion; He prepared for us the same graces, the same Sacraments, the same helps to salvation, and He ordained us for the same Eternal End.

His divine providence has, moreover, disposed things in such a manner that we have all need of one another for sustenance, and for the conveniences of life. The rich cannot get on without the poor; neither can the poor get on without the rich. Kings borrow their power, their abundance, their greatness, their riches, from their subjects; and subjects, on the other hand, derive protection and security from the laws and government of their sovereigns. Hence, that intercommunication of goods and services with one another. Hence, so many different crafts and professions, of which the most despised are often the most necessary to the community. Hence, those inclinations so different in men for different states, many of which are so hard and mean in appearance. Hence, the means that have been discovered of uniting, so to speak, the ends of the earth—the east with the west; the north with the south; the new world with the old. Hence, it is that those who do not know one another, who will never see one another, without thinking of it, work for one another and supply one another's necessities. Perhaps you have never reflected on all those traits of an infinite providence which links the human race in ties of social intercourse. But they are none the less admirable

and worthy of your attention, and of your most lively gratitude. But the strongest bond with which God would have us united to one another is that of a sincere and cordial love.

II

The Commandment.

2. You have heard, my brethren, the Commandment He has given us to this effect, and in such express terms—a Commandment which He compares to that by which He has ordained us to love Himself. "You shall love the Lord, your God," He says, "with your whole heart, with your whole soul, with your whole mind and strength. This is the first and greatest Commandment; and the second is like the first: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." It is a Commandment that is repeated in a thousand passages of Holy Scripture. It is intimated to us frequently in the Old Testament, but especially in the New, where we meet it at almost every page, and where it is inculcated in the most energetic manner.

Our blessed Lord, speaking to His apostles, and in their person to all those who should enter His Church, says: "A new Commandment I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you." Again, He calls it His Commandment, as if to show us that He has a particular interest in its fulfillment. "This is my Commandment to you, that you love one another." Nay, he goes so far as to make its practice the sign by which His followers should be known to the world, and distinguished from all others. "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another."

This view is brought out more boldly still by St. John. For he says in his epistle: "He that loveth his brother, remaineth in light," and, on the contrary, "He that loveth not his brother, remaineth in darkness and in death, and he is a murderer." And again: "He who says that he loves God, while he loves not his neighbor is a liar." For "how," continues the sacred text, "will he love God whom he does not see, whilst he loves not his neighbor whom he does see?" And on this point St. Jerome remarks that the apostle, when he was now an old man and unable any longer to discharge the functions of the ministry, was constantly repeating in the assemblies of the faithful those words: "My dear little children, love one another." And the disciples, teased at this constant repetition, say to him: "Master, why do you say to us unceasingly, the same thing?" The old man replied: "It is the precept of the Lord, and if we fulfill it, it is enough."

3. But let me put before you perhaps the most striking passage in all Scripture on this subject of the love of the neighbor. It is given in the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, where it is said that on the great day of the General Judgment the Sovereign Judge will ground his definitive sentence of the eternal happiness or loss of men, only on the observance or the transgression of the precept of charity towards the neighbor. He will say to the elect: "Come ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" not because you loved Me with your whole heart; because you gave yourselves up to a life of penitence to please Me; but "because I was hungry in My members, who are the poor; and you

gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; naked, and you covered Me; sick, and you visited Me; in prison, and you came to Me." So also He will say to the reprobate: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels;" not because you profaned My Sacraments; because you blasphemed My name; because you were drunkards, impure, or proud; but "because I was hungry in My poor, and you gave Me not to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink; I was a stranger and you took Me not in; naked, and you covered Me not; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me." Is it not astonishing, my brethren, that here God seems to forget Himself, and to have no regard for the sins that are committed against Himself, and only to pay attention to the faults committed against the neighbor by disregarding the Commandment of fraternal charity.

SECOND SERMON—LOVE OF THE NEIGHBOR

I

"The New Commandment."

1. You will observe, dearly beloved, that our blessed Lord on different occasions calls the precept of love, now "a new Commandment," and again, "His Commandment," as if the love of the neighbor were unknown in the world before His time. It was, indeed, in a certain sense, a new Commandment, and as such, He was the Author of it; inasmuch as its motive and application, as understood by the Christian

world, were lost to mankind before He came amongst us. The motive of love, as understood by the ancient world, rested on the qualities of the object. And as the object of that love was man, in whom as a rule all the evil propensities of our nature were developed, it was no wonder that the love of men for one another was circumscribed to the most limited circle. They looked to the qualities of man himself, I say, as the motive of their love or hatred; and as bad qualities were as a rule more developed in men before the promulgation of the law of grace than good ones, it was no wonder that they were inflamed with the bitterest hatred for one another.

This defect in the motive our Lord would rectify, and substitute as the true motive of the love for the neighbor, our love for God Himself. He would have us love the neighbor as the child of God, irrespective of the qualities of that neighbor, whether they were good or evil. Similarily to the principle that obtains in the world which demands of us to benefit the friend of our friend, our blessed Lord would have us love our neighbor, who is the child of God, as an extension of the love we have for God Himself.

2. The motive of love being false, it was no wonder that the application of it should be erroneous likewise. Hence, in those times men looked upon those outside the limited circle of their acquaintances as enemies, to be persecuted, to be mulcted, to be torn in pieces. The Jew had no more courteous term for the Samaritan than 'a dog.' ("Thou are a dog of a Samaritan," was the courteous term applied to our Lord by His enemies) and the Gentile in his eyes was unclean, to hold intercourse with whom was defilement. "I thank the gods," said one of the most re-

nowned philosophers of ancient Greece, "that I am not a beast." And what did he mean by a beast? Nothing more, my friends, than a Barbarian—one of any other race than the Greek, whom alone he looked on and considered should be treated as a man. And we have in the classic languages to this day an eternal monument of man's uncharitableness to man in the word which gives every stranger the appelation of enemy, "hostis," as if nature would have it that those who were unacquainted with one another should have hostile interests; and therefore should be enemies to one another. Hence we see in the bloody spectacles of the Roman amphitheatre the natural application of the principle that obtained in the ancient world, where the multitudes gloated in the spectacle of blood, and took a rapturous joy in seeing the Christians torn to pieces by wild beasts; or, better still, in witnessing the gladiators dye their swords in each other's hearts' blood, for the delectation of the sovereign people.

3. It was to rectify this precept both in its motive and its application that our Lord devoted Himself as one of the chief points of Christian morality. Hence, in His instruction to the Jews, He says: "Hitherto it has been said, according to your tradition, 'thou shalt love thy friend and hate thy enemy'; but I, your Lord and Master; I, your Teacher and Lawgiver; I, your Redeemer and Model," I say to you: 'love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you; that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, who maketh His sun to rise on the good and bad, and sendeth His rain to fertilize the fields of the just and unjust alike. For, if you love

them that love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the publicans this? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? Do not also the heathens this' "

II

The Pattern of Our Love. Its Qualities.

1. But our Lord was not content with laying down the precept of love, and with giving us the motive of it. He would, moreover, hold out before us the pattern on which it was to be modeled, and would teach us the character and qualities it should have. That model was the highest that heaven itself was capable of giving us, and He would have the union of charity that should reign among Christians to be an approximation of the unity of the Godhead Itself. For, in that lovely discourse spoken after the Last Supper, the most sublime perhaps that ever was breathed into human ear or mind, He broke forth into that enraptured prayer for His disciples: "My Father, I am about to go to you by the consummation of My sacrifice. But before I go to suffer in accordance with your will, this I ask of you, as a last dying request, viz—that through your mercy you would grant this grace to My disciples and to all those who through them shall believe in Me, that they may be united, and may love one another, even as We are united, and as We love each other. And as We, O Father, are only one in substance, and You are in Me, and I in You; so, also, I wish that they be united in you and in Me, and in one another, by a perfect bond of charity." What words, dearly beloved! What sentiments! And could our Lord make known in

stronger terms the ardent desire that He has that we should live in mutual charity.

2. He would teach us the character and the qualities of that love. "My particular Commandment to you is," He says, "that you love one another, even as I have loved you." Now, the love of our divine Lord for us had three sets of qualities, which our love ought to have in proportion. It was tender and compassionate; it was active and accompanied with benefits; it was great and perfect.

The love of Jesus Christ for us was tender and compassionate; and it was this compassion and this tenderness that induced Him to descend into the bosom of the Virgin, and clothe Himself with our flesh in order to redeem us by dying for us on the cross. At the sight of the deep wounds made on us by sin, the bowels of the divine mercy were moved with compassion, and He employed to cure us the most extraordinary means, and the ones most capable of showing us to what an extent He carries His tenderness in our regard.

And what tenderness, what compassion of the Saviour while on earth in all His relations with men! What kindly condescension towards the poor, the sick, the afflicted! What compassion for the hungry multitude! What overflowing mercy towards penitent sinners! What patience and solicitude, what cordial affection towards His disciples! What meekness and forbearance towards His enemies! What generosity and charity to all! Ah, yes, the love of Jesus was a tender, a compassionate love.

And we also, after His example, ought to be filled with compassion and tenderness for one another, and

to employ all the means in our power to help one another in our spiritual and bodily needs.

3. The love of the Saviour for us was an active love, a love accompanied with all sorts of benefits. Can we be ignorant, dearly beloved, of those gifts without number with which He has enriched us, and with which He enriches us every day—the merits of His sufferings and death, His divine instructions, the Sacraments He has instituted for us, the graces He spreads broadcast in the world, the eternal glory He has prepared for us, and so many others of which we know only a portion?

Our love for our neighbor ought also to be active and accompanied with all the services that we are in a position to render him.

"My dear children," says St. John, "let us love one another, not in word and in tongue," merely saying that we love; but let us prove our love by our works, by the good that we do our neighbor, "let us love him in deed and in truth."

4. The love of the Saviour for us was great and perfect. "No man," says this God of love, "can show greater love than this, that He lay down His life for His friends." The love of our divine Lord for us could then go no further than that it should cause Him to die in so cruel a manner for us. And it is this the apostle eulogizes when he says that "even for a just man, scarcely anyone can be found to sacrifice his life," but the Saviour's love for us was so great and generous, that He died for us even when the whole human race were his declared enemies.

But are we obliged to die for one another? Yes, we are, my brethren, in certain contingencies. We

would be obliged to die for our neighbor if the sacrifice of our life were necessary for his soul's salvation. Except in this case, we are not obliged to sacrifice our life; but we ought always to be in the disposition to sacrifice our goods of an inferior order to those interests of the neighbor which are for him of a superior order; i.e., our goods of fortune, to prevent to him the loss of the goods of nature,—life, health, reputation; and our own life to save his soul. This is an incontrovertible law, which all the saints have not only taught, but which they practised with the greatest exactness.

6. Love, then, dearly beloved, your neighbor, with a sincere, cordial, affectionate love. Bear towards him an affection which will make you desire for him the same goods that you desire for yourself. Let the charity that reigns among you be a reflection of that divine affection which the Persons of the Blessed Trinity breathe towards one another. Love him with a tender, beneficent, generous love, even as Jesus Christ has loved us. Thus, loving your neighbor for God's sake, you will fulfill the whole law, and merit to be received into the kingdom of eternal love, where you will rejoice with the saints and angels for endless ages.

THIRD SERMON—THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

"Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me."—(Exod. XX, 3.)

I

False Worship of the True God

1. In studying the precepts of the Decalogue, we find that some of them are put in the positive form; some, in the negative: "Thou shalt"; "Thou shalt not." But whether put in the positive or in the negative form, their signification is at once both positive and negative. They command us to do something; and they forbid us to do something. This we see in the first precept of the law given above. It forbids us to adore strange gods: "Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me"; and it commands us to worship the true God, as it is put in Deuteronomy: "The Lord, thy God, shalt thou adore; Him only shalt thou serve."

2. Passing over the Commandment in its positive form, or the injunction to worship the true God, which seems so conformable to reason, let us treat of it in its negative, or prohibitive form: "Thou shalt not," etc.

Now, we violate the Commandment, and are guilty of a grievous sin against it in two ways: either by paying worship to false gods, or by giving a false worship to the true God.

As to the worship of false gods, happily, I need say little; for idolatry is obsolete and has been for centuries among the cultured natives of the West,

and only among the Orientals and the uncivilized peoples of the world is it practised today.

But with regard to the false worship of the true God, this, unhappily, prevails among large sections of those who go under the general designation of Christians. Those latter, we call heretics, from a Greek word which signifies that they make pick and choice in their beliefs; and they are represented in the world chiefly in the numerous sects who go under the general designation of Protestants.

These we have amongst us on all sides, and it is one of the chief duties of our lives to preserve ourselves and our families from the contagion of their heresy. This we are commanded at all times to do by the teaching of the Catholic Church; and in doing so we are to adopt the means pointed out to us by her as our teacher—a teacher directed by the Holy Ghost, and with the wisdom and the experience gained in the twenty centuries of her history.

II

The Evil of Mixed Marriages.

3. What are these means? Well, doubtless, there are many; but of them, the first and the chief of all is, segregation from their lives and ways, and, especially, as has been always and ever inculcated, from entering into family connections with them by marriage. The evil of mixed marriages is the colossal evil of our time and country; and its fruits are the widespread apostacy from the Catholic religion that we witness on all sides around us.

Human nature is the same today as it was in the days of Moses and the prophets; and what was the

commandment given by God through Moses to the people under his leadership? It was this, as it is given in the seventh chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy: "When the Lord, thy God, shall have brought thee into the land which thou art going to possess, thou shalt make no marriages with the people that are living there. Thou shalt not give thy daughter to his son, nor take his daughter for thy son. For she will turn away thy son from following Me, that he may rather serve strange gods; and the wrath of the Lord will be kindled, and will quickly destroy thee."

And in the carrying out of this wise policy of segregation, a policy dictated by nature from the beginning of the world, we see Abraham when he found himself, as the Scripture says, "old and advanced in age," call to him his faithful servant, Eleazer, and thus address him: "Swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, that thou take not a wife for my son of the daughters of the Cananites among whom I dwell; but that thou go to my own country and kindred and take a wife from thence for my son, Isaac."

And it was by adopting those wise means, and others, that the holy man earned for himself and his descendants the grace of preserving the true religion, and of being chosen to be the depositaries of revelation, and the progenitors of the Messias.

This law of segregation from the family and social life of the members of false religions has always been among the chief preservatives of peoples from falling away from the true faith. Nay, and we see, on the other hand, that close and family associations with those of false religions has been the ruin

of men the most distinguished in antiquity. "And after that men began to be multiplied upon the earth," says Scripture, "and daughters were born to them, the sons of God," that is, the descendants of the holy patriarch, Seth, "seeing the daughters of men," that is, of the cursed race of Cain, "that they were fair, took to themselves wives of all whom they chose." And God said: "My spirit shall not remain in man forever, because he is flesh; and his days shall be shortened . . . . And God, seeing that the wickedness of men was great on the earth, and that all the thought of their heart was bent upon evil at all times; it repented Him that He had made man on the earth, and being touched inwardly with sorrow of the heart, He said: I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—for it repenteth Me that I have made him." (Gen. VI, 1-7.)

4. To pass over innumerable examples of Scripture, let me remind you of one other, and this a very remarkable one. Solomon, King of Israel, was a saint from his youth; nay, one of the most lively figures of our blessed Lord Himself. He was, as Scripture lets us know, the very oracle of the Holy Ghost, whose every sentence was a parable of wisdom. When now he was of mature age, and was blessed with prosperity and glory above all other men, he neglected the warning of God, and took unto himself wives from the neighboring peoples, according to his fancy.

And how did it all end? He who had been world-famous for his glory and wisdom, by degrees fell away from the piety of his former years, and became as an old man a reprobate. He turned away from

the worship of the true God, and offered incense to the false gods of his pagan wives, and built temples to them; and thus he not only lost all the glory and virtue of the early years of his reign; but also, in the opinion of St. Jerome and others, his immortal soul. For Scripture which is so much taken up with his works and with his inspired writings in no place hints even at the probability of his ultimate conversion.

What does all this teach us, my brethren?

Why, to keep ourselves free from close association with, and, above all, from intermarriages with those of a different religion to ours. And if we neglect this injunction of prudence and wisdom; and if we despise the teachings of Scripture, and the Commands of the Church; I declare it will be with us as it has been with those who took the same foolish step before us. And, to quote again the words of Deuteronomy, "You shalt make no marriages with those strange people. For if you do, they will turn you away from following the true religion that you inherited from your fathers that you may rather follow false religions, and the wrath of God will quickly be turned against you."

I know, dear brethren, that there may be exceptions, there are, very rare ones, to this general rule; and that occasionally the Protestant party is converted, may become even an exemplary Catholic, and that there results at times from such a marriage a pious Catholic family. Necessary circumstances and wise precautions taken beforehand may, though rarely, lead to happy results; and we have the example of many pious converts to Catholicism among us. But, my brethren, outside of those special cases

where circumstances of necessity or duty intervene we cannot with impunity and without risk violate the laws of prudence. Neither can we disregard the counsels of Scripture, nor the teachings of the Catholic Church, warning us against the going into the occasions of sin; and that which the Scriptures everywhere call an abomination and an adultery; namely, the falling away from the true religion, and the offering to God of a false and corrupt worship.

5. Do I speak intemperate words, my brethren; words that are not justified by the standing facts in our midst? Look around you and count the numerous apostates from religion, and the many fallen away Catholics that are among you. See the many families here in your midst whose fathers and mothers were Catholics, and who could point to a long Catholic ancestry, today practise the Protestant religion, or no religion; are not Baptized even; and are aliens to every thought and sentiment that they and their ancestors once felt and practised.

For myself, I testify as an old missionary whose field of service has extended from the Rockies to the ocean, and from British Columbia to Southern California, that I have never known any city or district or parish where there are so large a percentage of fallen away Catholics as I see in this parish of——. What is the cause of this? Every social and religious result has its history and its cause. No doubt the causes that led to those apostacies, you know better than I can. But I here call to witness the fact which you all are cognizant of, that in nearly all cases of the falling away of individuals and families in your neighborhood from the belief and practice

of the Catholic religion, the cause is intermarriage with the members of the Protestant religion.

Let me conclude, then, by impressing on you the importance of observing this first and greatest of the Commandments: that, namely, which forbids you to offer worship to false gods; and what is of equal, nay, of far greater importance to you; which forbids you to offer a false worship to the true God.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—RESPECT DUE TO OUR HOLY PLACES

"It is written; My House shall be called the house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves."—(Matt. XXI, 13.)

I

"The House of God."

1. Great indeed was the profanation of the temple of Jerusalem when beasts, and money changers, and buyers and sellers, crowded its marble courts and the voice and bustle of worldly traffic rang through its halls consecrated to prayer and sacrifice. And scandulous the conduct of those whose criminal laxity turned the House of the Living God into a mart of shameless and sordid commerce. And it is little wonder that our Blessed Lord, fired with a holy zeal for the purity of religious worship, should thus scourge the profaners of the holy place, and drive them from the place they were unworthy to occupy within its sacred enclosure.

But whilst we reprobate the irregularities of those whose conduct seems so inexcusable, and whilst we sympathize with our Lord in His fearless zeal for the honor of the temple; it is good for us to reflect on our own duty in regard to our churches, and to consider whether we pay to them the respect that is their due.

I propose, therefore, dear brethren, to address you today on the important subject of the respect that we owe to them.

2. That the greatest respect is due to our churches might be proved by many arguments; but I confine myself today to saying that they demand our greatest reverence, if only for one reason, namely, that, in the words of our Lord, "they are the House of God."

It is true that God is everywhere; that He fills all space by His immensity, even as He fills all time by His eternity. He is in hell with the damned, to make them feel the rigors of His justice; just as He is in heaven with His elect to crown their victories. He is present everywhere, as the theologians say, by His essence, and by His presence, and by His power. "If I ascend into heaven," says the Psalmist, "Thou art there; if I descend into hell, thou are there; if I take my wings in the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, is it not Thy hand that shall guide me thither, and Thy right hand shall hold me."

But though the Lord be everywhere and though He fills all space by His immensity; yet He has chosen certain places as the theatres in which to work His greatest wonders and to show forth the most admirable effects of His benign will. Amongst those may be reckoned our churches. In those He has chosen to take up His abode. In them He lives as in His own palace. He has erected His court in them no less truly than in the abode of His glory, and they are in truth the "House of God."

In this earthly abode of the King of kings, everything proclaims His greatness, His majesty, no less clearly than His meekness and His love. The cross is His standard. The holy tabernacle is His council chamber. The ministers of His church, they are His officers. The faithful, they are His courtiers. The

tribunals of penance serve as His seat of justice. The pulpit of truth is the place where He pronounces His commands and where He intimates to us His wills; and all there announce His greatness and His presence.

II

Reverential Awe of the Saints.

Recall to mind dear brethren, the reverential awe the presence of the Lord inspired in His servants in the Old Law, whether that presence was manifested by personal apparition, or whether He employed to this effect the ministry of angels.

The Book of Genesis records that as soon as our Father, Adam, heard the voice of God in the Garden of Paradise, he was stricken with a mighty fear, and no knowing what to do, he hid himself among the trees, as if he did not know that we cannot conceal ourselves from Him who penetrates to the depths of consciences the most obscure, and who unfolds the windings of the most crooked heart.

Again, Abraham, seeing three angels who represented, according to the opinion of interpreters of Scripture, the adorable Persons of the Holy Trinity, prostrated himself before them and was seized with a holy fear. Jacob testified none the less his reverence when he perceived that mystic ladder by which the angels pass continually to execute the orders of their Master. For, he cried out in a transport of astonishment: "Truly, this is a holy place, and I knew it not"; and lest his descendants in after years become unmindful of the spot sanctified by the divine apparition, he raised thereon a pillar and consecrated it by the unction of oil, that it might serve as a

monument to all after ages. And Moses, although he enjoyed a familiarity with God which had been accorded to no other man, yet ceased not to be filled with fear every time he spoke to Him; and when he received the tables of the Law on Mount Sinai, how many preparations, and prayers, and fasts, did he not order before approaching the awful place where God manifested His power. It was forbidden to all others, under penalty of death, to approach the holy mountain; and in order that they might be mere spectators from afar of what took place, they were obliged to prepare themselves with care, and to purify themselves, and to even wash their garments. And, yet, it is said in the *Acts of the Apostles* that it was only through the ministry of angels that the Law was given.

How many like examples have we not in Scripture of the profound reverence which the majesty of the Lord's presence inspired, and of the terror of those who were witnesses of it? So great was this fear that it came to be a proverb among the Jews, that it was impossible to see the Lord and live.

What ought, then, to be our fear and reverence, dearly beloved, when we are in the sanctuaries of the New Law? There is no question here of figures or passing representations, but of God's abiding presence. God does not manifest Himself to us by angels, or through the agency of some extraordinary signs. He is in our churches as truly as in the abode of His glory. He is here by a special presence, and not merely as He is in other places. He makes felt in our churches the most particular effects of His power; and the sole difference between our sanctuaries and heaven is that there He manifests Himself

clearly in His Essence, and here He manifests Himself to us only under the shadows of faith. Jesus resides here Personally. His holy Humanity is here, together with His Divinity. He is here with the same Body that He assumed for us at the Incarnation, and with the same Blood that was shed for us upon the cross.

Should we not, therefore, whenever we enter into our churches be filled with awe and fear at the presence of the Divine Majesty that dwells unseen upon our altars? Should we not cry out with Jacob: "Yes, the Lord is truly here. This place is terrible. It is the House of God, and the gate of Heaven."

SECOND SERMON—THE RESPECT DUE TO OUR HOLY PLACES

I

"The House of Prayer."

1. Two other reasons why we should have a great veneration for our churches are—that they are places set apart for prayer, and because of the marvels that are worked in them.

If our Blessed Lord said of the Temple of Jerusalem, which after all was only a figure of the temples of the New Law, that it was a house of prayer, with how much greater reason does not this honorable title of houses of prayer belong to them? This motive appears so much the more pressing as our Saviour made use of it alone when He expelled from the temple the impious men who pro-

faned it. "Get ye hence," said He to them. "Know you not that this house is a house of prayer; and you have made of it a den of thieves."

I know that we can pray everywhere; that God hears the voice of those who address Him wherever they may be—that He hears the groans of His servants from the depths of dungeons, as well as from the height of thrones; from the most savage deserts, not less than from the most numerous assemblies of piety. I know that He heard the groans of Job upon his dunghill, and the prayer of the youths in the fiery furnace of Babylon; that He heard Jonas from out the whale's belly, and Manasses in chains; that He heard Jeremias from the bottom of the cistern into which he was cast; and Daniel from the lions' den. But it is true also that He has destined certain places from all time where He wishes that the peoples should offer Him their vows and where He accords with greater facility the graces which they ask. The saints of all ages were well convinced of this truth when they showed themselves so assiduous by their presence in places consecrated to public prayer. The early Christians feared not the menaces of tyrants, nor the most cruel death, when there was question of their being present in the Catacombs where the faithful were obliged by reason of persecutions, to celebrate the Divine Mysteries. And does not our Lord Himself confirm what I say by His example when He goes so often into the Temple of Jerusalem to pray?

And so our churches, being places set apart to offer our vows to God, to beg of Him His favors, and to sing His praises, with what reverence ought we not hold ourselves in them, so as not to draw upon

ourselves His judgments when we come to implore His mercy?

2. All nations have always had a great respect for the places consecrated to the gods whom they adored. I need not bring forward the example of the pagans of olden times, who, as the philosopher, Seneca, relates, entered into the temples of their idols only with a certain religious fear. They kept their heads uncovered, their eyes cast down. They went bare-footed, and observed all the other marks of a perfect modesty. It was strictly forbidden to speak in them, and in order that this prohibition be not ignored by anyone, it was written in large characters on the walls and on the outer doors of the edifices. Neither need I tell of the veneration of the Mohamadans for their mosques, or the Hindus and other idolatrous peoples for the places dedicated to their gods. The measures of the peoples' respect for their places of worship has always been looked upon as the measure of their piety.

See again how great was the veneration of the Israelites in the days of their fervor for the Tabernacle and afterwards for the Temple of Jerusalem. It was forbidden to the Gentiles to enter it, and this privilege was permitted only to the Jews. The priests and levites alone had the right to enter into the Sanctuary, and the High Priest, to the exclusion of all others, was allowed to enter, and that but once a year, into the Holy of Holies.

Death was the punishment of all those who observed not with the greatest exactness the rules which God Himself had been pleased to make on this subject; and yet, what was this Temple but a very imperfect figure of our churches?

There was offered there only the sacrifices of beasts, and all the ceremonies that were there observed with so great solemnity ended only with practices purely exterior. Its most precious treasures were the Ark of the Covenant, the Tables of the Law, and the Rod of Aaron.

Now, what comparison between all these and our Christian churches where the Son of God is daily offered in Sacrifice to His Father; where the Ark of the New Covenant is enclosed, and where sins are forgiven through the sovereign power which the Saviour of the world has left to His Church, and where the work of Redemption is consummated in regard to each member of the church in particular?

II

The Theatres of God's Wonders.

1. But, lest I seem to labor overmuch this argument, let me ask you to consider the wonders that are worked in our churches, and this is the last motive that I will put before you to induce you to venerate them with your whole heart. Raise your eyes then, and look around you on all sides. Does not everything here preach holiness? See that sacred font in which you were regenerated. It was there that you ceased to be the slaves of the devil, and that you were made members of the mystical body of Jesus Christ. It was there that you were changed from darkness into light, and were raised from death to life. Cast your eyes on those confessionals where you received so many absolutions, where you promised so often to lead a holy life, and where pardon was granted you only on condition that you quitted your bad habits and became reformed.

Look upon those altar rails where you tasted so often of the Gift of God, and where you partook of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. See this pulpit from which you heard so many instructions, and where the preacher so often declaimed, I hope not without effect, against your vices. See this altar where there was offered for your sins the Innocent Victim, but for which you would have felt long ago the vengeance of heaven. Look upon the images of the saints which reproach you for your laxity. O holy and amiable sojourn of the Saints! O places worthy of being frequented by the faithful! O haunts of holy souls; may we have always in our hearts the sentiments of the Psalmist, when he cried out in transport: "I have loved the beauty of Thy House, O Lord, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth."

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Its Titles—Transubstantiation.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a king who made a marriage for his son," etc.—(Matt. XXII, 1-14.)

1. By the marriage spoken of in this parable is signified the union of Christ with the Church, which was effected on Calvary; and the banquet prepared on the occasion denotes the call of the Jews to the faith. After their rejection with injury of that call, He turned to the Gentile peoples, who received it with joy, and honored it with their presence and devotion.

But the parable has also a secondary and subordinate meaning, and it refers to the mystery of the most Holy Eucharist which was instituted in connection with the same marriage. As this view has a more practical application for us, the children of the Gentiles, I will, with your forbearance, devote this discourse to the consideration of the mystery; and I wish to show you in it what we ought to believe, touching the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

The Eucharist is a Sacrament which contains really, truly, and substantially, the Body and Blood. Soul and Divinity of our Lord, Jesus Christ, under the appearances of bread and wine. The holy fathers and doctors of the Church have given it different names, according to the different relations under which it may be considered.

They call it "the most adorable, the most august Sacrament"; because it not only contains grace like the other Sacraments; but it contains the Author of all graces.

They call it "the most holy Sacrament of the Altar"; because it is upon our altars that this great Mystery is accomplished, and our Lord resides there Personally, as in the abode of His glory.

They call it "the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass"; because it is truly a Sacrifice and a Sacrament at the same time.

They give it the name of "Communion," and "Viaticum:" of "Communion"; because being distributed among the faithful, it has the power of uniting them among themselves by the bonds of a perfect charity; of "Viaticum"; because being given to the dying it makes them pass happily from this life to a holy eternity.

Finally, they call it the "Bread of angels," the "Bread of children," the "Hidden Manna," the "Table of the Lord," the "Sacred Banquet," names which belong to it perfectly; as also many others, the explanation of which I need not delay on.

2. Let us now see the marvels and miracles which are operated in this great Sacrament, and which are the object of our faith. The priest honored with the sacerdotal character which is ineffable, deputed by the Church, and clothed with the sacred vestments, celebrates the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He performs at first a great number of prayers and holy ceremonies; and being come to the moment of Consecration, he takes bread, and it is no longer in his own person that he speaks and acts, but in the Person

of Jesus Christ. For he does not say: "This is the Body of Jesus Christ"; but, "This is My Body." In the same way in the Consecration of the chalice he does not say: "This is the Blood of Jesus Christ"; but, "This is the chalice of My Blood which shall be shed for the salvation of men"; and on the instant that those words are pronounced, the entire substances of the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of our Lord. This is what the church calls "Trans-substantiation"; that is to say, the change from one substance into another.

Though the substances of the bread and wine are changed; the accidents, as they call them, of color, taste, figure, and so forth, remain; and this by the miracle of God's power which sustains them independently of this subjects, and contrary to their natures.

Moreover, the Body and Blood of the Saviour subsist after a spiritual manner and superior to the condition of material substances, even as did our Lord's sacred Body after the Resurrection, and they subsist whole and entire in each particle of the species.

Jesus Christ is truly offered in sacrifice to the Father in an unbloody manner, and He is consumed without suffering in His Person.

Although by the force of the words of Consecration the Body and Blood alone are present, nevertheless, by concomitance, as they say; that is, by a necessary accompaniment, the Body, and Blood, Soul, and Godhead are under each species; and the Father and the Holy Ghost are united to them in a particular manner, although they are not present Sacramentally. O Jesus, we firmly believe that Thou art here truly present in the Sacrament of the Altar. We

adore Thee as our Lord and Saviour. We thank Thee for all Thy past benefits. We thank Thee especially for all the graces Thou hast prepared for us in this Sacrament. Grant, we beseech Thee that our love for Thee may increase daily more and more, even to that blessed time when we may be permitted to possess Thee eternally in the Kingdom of Heaven.

SECOND SERMON—THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

The Real Presence Shown from Scripture.

In my former discourse I stated the doctrine of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ, Body and Blood, Soul and Godhead, in the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. You will ask, what grounds we have to render our faith firm and unmovable on this great mystery.

We have grounds which put it above all suspicion and uncertainty: grounds which remove from our mind even the least appearance of doubt. These are the Sacred Scriptures. These are the decisions of the Church and the belief of the faithful in all ages.

As to the Holy Scriptures, we can have nothing stronger or more clear and precise than the words of our blessed Lord on this subject. And, in fact, if He had undertaken to convince us of this truth, could He explain Himself more clearly than He has done? To Luther, at least, it seemed quite evident that He could not. In one of his later works he says: "I should have wished to deny the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, in order to confound the Papists. But so clear and strong are the words of Scripture which

establish it, that in spite of my inclination so to do, and though I strained every nerve to reach the point, yet I could never persuade myself to doubt or deny it."

Hear then with respect the words of this Divine Saviour: "I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven. If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever; and the Bread that I will give is my Flesh for the life of the world."—John VI, 53-8.

The Jews who were present, hearing those words, said to one another, (just as non-Catholics in our own day say): "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Does our blessed Lord explain away what He had said before? Does He tell us that He meant His Flesh was to be eaten only in figure; that the Bread and Wine of Communion were only a figure, a representation of His adorable Body and Blood, as we are told by Protestants today? Oh, no; far from it! He confirms what He had said before, and explains Himself in more precise language, if more precise language were possible. More than that, He confirms His former statement by a most solemn oath, and tells them plainly that if they do not believe His words they shall never taste the sweets of eternal life. "Amen, amen, I say to you," (and this formula, according to the custom of the Jews, signified a most solemn oath), "except you eat of the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood you shall not have life in you." He confirms it again and again, and this in stronger and yet stronger language. "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath life everlasting, and I will raise him up on the last day; for," He continues, "My Flesh is meat indeed,

and My Blood is drink indeed! He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me, and I in him." "As the living Father," He continues still, "hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so, he that eateth Me the same also shall live by Me."—(John VI. 53-8).

2. And in the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, see how He explains Himself when speaking to His disciples. "Taking bread He blessed it and broke and gave to them, saying: "take and eat; *This* is My Body."

Taking also the cup full of wine, "He blessed it and gave to His disciples, saying: drink ye all of this; for *this* is My Blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for the remission of sins." (Matt. XXVI. 26-27. Mark XIV. 22-23. Luke XXII. 19-20.)

Now, what could be more clear and precise than this? Can words convey an idea in more forcible and precise language? And how still can there be found minds so shallow as to take those words in a figurative sense?

Hear again St. Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians, "For, lo," he says, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you; (you know that the great Apostle was specially instructed by our Lord during his sojourn in the desert of Arabia) "that the Lord Jesus the same night on which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke, and said: Take ye and eat; This is My Body which shall be delivered for you; this do for the commemoration of Me. In like manner also the chalice after He had supped, saying: This chalice is the New Testament in My Blood;

this do as often as ye shall drink for the commemoration of Me. For, as often as ye shall eat this Bread and drink the Chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until He come. Therefore, whosoever shall eat this Bread or drink the Chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of the Chalice. For, he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh judgment to himself not discerning the Body of the Lord."—(I Cor. XI, 23-29.)

3. *This is My Body that shall be delivered for you. This is My Blood of the New Testament. Whosoever eateth this Bread and drinketh the chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord."* How can a man be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord be receiving and eating unworthily that which is but a figure of the Lord? Is a man guilty of the body and of the blood of his fellow man if he outrages that which is a figure of that man; if he burns his effigy, or otherwise dishonors it? No, my friends, men who argue thus are trifling with our Lord's words; are they who in the words of St. Peter "twist the Sacred Scriptures to their own damnation."

Let us not imitate the perversity of those non-Catholics, blind dupes led by blind guides of "private interpretation," and "rational interpretation of the Scriptures," nor the incredulity of the carnal Jews who turn away from our blessed Lord, saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" "This is a hard saying and who can believe it?" Let us rather bind ourselves the closer to the spouse of Christ, the Holy Catholic Church, which the apostle describes

as "the pillar and the ground of truth," proposing this truth to us, and say with the Prince of the apostles: "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

THIRD SERMON—THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The teaching of the Church, and the belief of the Faithful.

1. In this discourse I go on to show the doctrine of the Real Presence from the teaching of the Church and from the belief of the faithful in all ages. As to that teaching and that belief, they are evident and without reply: "Whoever shall say," says the Catholic Church teaching by the Council of Trent, "that in the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, the substance of bread and wine remain together with the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." (Con. Trid. Sess. 13. Cap. 4). Here are a few of the sayings of the great Fathers of the early Church on this mystery, sayings which might be multiplied a hundred fold, were such testimony required: "With all certitude," says St. Cyril of Jerusalem, who lived in the fourth century, "with all certitude we receive the Body and Blood of Christ. For under the species of bread is given to you His Body, and under the species of wine is given His Blood, so that having received the Body of Christ, you may be made participators with Him of His Body and Blood." (Cyril Hieros. Catech. Mystag. 4). "You see Him," says St. John Chrysostom, "not now in the crib, but upon the Altar." And again: "What is in the chalice is the same as that

which flowed from His side, and we are made sharers of the same." And St. Augustine in the ninth book of his *Confessions* speaks pathetically of the great devotion his mother, St. Monica, had for the Holy Mass, as does also St. Ambrose of his sister, St. Martella. The tradition of all the centuries, the unanimous consent of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and of the Catholic faithful of all places and at all times since the establishment of the religion of Jesus Christ, the uninterrupted continuation of belief in this dogma from the times of the apostles to our own, the testimony of all holy persons and martyrs; the miracles worked on different occasions, and which no one can deny; all this forms a proof so strong and so convincing that it is impossible to resist it.

2. And have unbelievers been able to allege any reasons—I do not say solid ones—to combat the reality of our Lord's presence in the Blessed Sacrament? In fact, what could they bring forward to destroy this article of our faith? Will they say that this miracle is impossible; and that God cannot change the substances of bread and wine into that of His Body and Blood?

They dare not advance a proposition so absurd. They tell us they believe that God could become Incarnate; could unite Himself to our humanity; could become a helpless Infant; suffer poverty and want; expose Himself to the contempt of men; become "the reproach of men and an outcast among the people"; and, finally, die in agony on the cross; that the Divinity could even descend into the grave and become the partner of the Body even when the Soul of Christ was departed from it. And cannot the same Divinity and Humanity be present under the appear-

ance of a substance which in a sense is more honorable than a dead body laid in the grave? What, He who has created heaven and earth and all things visible and invisible, could He not change one substance into another? Does not this change of substance take place every day, even naturally, in men and all living things? A man eats and drinks bread and wine, his daily food; and by the process of digestion that bread and wine are changed into the substances of his flesh and blood. A cow eats grass, and in time the green herb is changed into beef, and milk, and horns and nerves. Seed is cast into the ground and in time the generative virtue of that seed makes instinct with life the red earth which is changed into the blade, the slender stem, and, finally, into the waving field of golden grain.

Will they say that this mystery is not established clearly enough in the Holy Scriptures? It is impossible that they should think so seriously. And if they do say it one can advance boldly that they speak against their true sentiments. I suppose that they read the Holy Bible in good faith and without prejudice.

Will they dare say that the Church has not explained itself clearly? They know not what they say. What then prevents them from submitting to a truth so evident, and which they cannot be ignorant of? What is it that blinds them to so great a light? It is prejudice of education in some. It is downright perversity in others—a perversity which Luther tried but could not make it triumph over his better judgment. It is temporal interests or human entanglements in those. It is pride, ambition, the spirit of cabal, in others still. They cannot deny it; and of this the persistent efforts of non-Catholics for

four hundred years to explain away the obvious sense of Scripture are proof—efforts which have resulted in giving the monstrous total of nearly two hundred shades of meaning to the simple sentence, "This is My Body."

3. Let us deplore the misfortune of our erring brethren, and beg of God that He may be pleased to have compassion on those unhappy ones by taking away the veil which conceals from them the truth, that they may have the happiness of entering into the bosom of the Church, and that they may adore with us the great mystery, the masterpiece of divine love.

We give Thee thanks, O God, for having brought us up in the Catholic Church and for procuring us a pious education. If we had been born in the darkness of Protestantism, where would we be now? We would without doubt be as so many others "sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death." But at the same time let us fear to abuse the benefits of God, and above all the inestimable gift of faith. In former times the countries which heresy has infected were filled with fervent Catholics. If we despise the Kingdom of God, that is to say, our religion, He will take it from us following the threat which the Saviour of the world has made, and it will be given to a nation that will make good use of it.

Amiable Jesus, preserve us from such a calamity. We detest the unbelief of the enemies of our faith. We believe firmly that You are in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar as really present as you are today in heaven, and as you were once the blessed Victim of our sins on Calvary. We are ready to shed the last drop of our blood in defense of this truth. "We believe, O Lord, help our unbelief."

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—DUTIES OF PARENTS

"There was a certain ruler, whose son was sick at Capharnaum. He, having heard that Jesus was come from Judea into Galilee, went to Him, and prayed Him to come down and heal his son; for, he was at the point of death," etc.— John IV, 46-53.

The Rearing of, and the Providing for, Their Children.

1. In the example of the ruler mentioned in this Gospel there is conveyed to us one of the most important lessons in all Scripture. This has regard to the care which parents and those in authority ought to have for their children and domestics.

This ruler was, according to St. Jerome, a counsellor or petty prince, belonging to the court of Herod, King of Galilee.

But, unbeliever as he was, and busied with the details of his important office, he still had solicitude for his dear child lying at home sick unto death with a violent fever. And hearing of the wonders wrought by our Lord in favor of the sick and the distressed, he came to beg of Him the restoration of his son's health. Nor was he disheartened at the apparent rebuff of our Lord, but only besought Him the more earnestly, saying: "Lord, come down before that my son die." And our Lord, seeing the goodness of his heart, and the earnestness of his petition, bade him go in peace, for that his son was cured in that hour.

But not yet was there an end to the solicitude of this tender father. For, recognizing the Divinity of our Lord from His power in giving life and health,

he not only believed in Him himself, but ceased not till by his entreaties and prayers he procured the conversion of his whole family and household.

Dearly beloved, what an example for us of zeal for the welfare of those dear to us, and for those under our charge! What an example to parents in particular in the discharge of the duties to which they are obliged in favor of their children—duties which they are found only too often remiss in fulfilling, and which will be one of the severest counts they shall have to answer for before the judgment seat of God.

I take occasion, therefore, from the incidents recorded in this Gospel to speak to you today, fathers and mothers, on one of the great duties of parents in regard to their children: namely, the duty of rearing them and providing for their temporal welfare.

This duty arises primarily out of God's method of governing the universe—of conducting creatures to their end through the agency of second causes. In the creation of beings God alone acts, because He alone is capable of acting, creation being an act of Almighty power; but in the government of the universe it is His will to entrust to His creatures, according to their capabilities, a share of His universal providence. In this He acts as a king who rules his kingdom through the agency of provincial governors; or as a military commander, who entrusts subordinate command to his inferior officers.

Now amongst the positions of responsibility given by God to creatures that entrusted to parents is, whether we consider the relations of children to Jesus Christ, the sublime end to which they are ordained, or the many helps they stand in need of for

the attainment of that end, one of the most important. And it may be said that just as the parental prerogative is a participation in the Fatherhood of God, so, also, the duties consequent on that prerogative are a participation in His Divine providence in regard to their children. In other words, parents are God's helpers in the work of their production and upbringing.

2. See, then, fathers and mothers, that you discharge your duties with fidelity towards your children. Know that your office is one that demands great generosity and watchfulness; nay, a generosity and watchfulness that must resemble in some sort those of God Himself. "I have brought up children," says He by His prophet.

And how are not His generosity and watchfulness shown in regard to us, His children? He daily provides us with food, lodging, raiment—everything, in fact, to minister to our happiness and well-being here below. What is this earth but a fruitful mother teeming with all kinds of riches to minister to our wants? All beings, animate and inanimate, are our servants. The great ocean bears our burdens to and from distant lands, and nourishes us with its teeming abundance. The heavenly bodies rejoice us with the light and warmth of their rays. Nay, even the tiniest star that twinkles in the remotest heavens bears to us a message of God's watchfulness and providence over us.

And as to our souls' needs, see how the same generous and provident Parent watches over us. He provides for the spiritual life of our souls by divine grace and His holy word. Consider the many means of supernatural help He has provided for us in the

holy Catholic Church. The Sacraments, are they not so many channels of grace flowing to us from the inexhaustible source of the Sacred Heart?

Above all, in the mystery of the Eucharist does He not nourish us with His own precious Body and Blood? And it is for this reason that He is compared in Scripture to the "pelican of the wilderness." "I am made like the pelican of the wilderness." Now the pelican of the wilderness was a bird much famed in Eastern story. And it was said of it that when it perceived its little ones bitten by a snake it tried to preserve their lives with its own blood, which it drew from its breast with great pecks of its beak.

Brethren, we, the offspring of the good God, were all bitten by the infernal serpent; and Jesus Christ, seeing no other means of reviving our dead souls, opens His own sacred Breast, as you see, and reanimates us with His own life Blood. Nor does the solicitude of this best of Fathers end here; for He every day nourishes our poor famished souls with the same sacred Blood, which He communicates to us in the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Well, dear parents, your generosity and spirit of sacrifice in favor of your children must resemble in some sort that of Jesus Christ. Nor are you in the fulfillment of this great duty to your children to look forward to a mere temporal reward. No, parents, "*sursum corda*"; lift up your hopes on high, and look forward to an eternal reward which God alone can give. Know that you are carrying out the great work that He has allotted to you in life; that you discharge the functions of a God-given ministry here; and for this He Himself will be your reward.

When Saint Thomas of Aquin had finished his

immortal work the "Summa Theologica," our Lord appeared to him and said: "Thou hast written well of Me, O Thomas. What reward shall I give thee?" "None other than Thyself, O Lord," replied the saint; and this must be the constant hope and aspiration of the Christian parent, "None other than Thyself, O Lord."

Parents are but too apt to look forward to the prospect of a contented and happy old age in the midst of a prosperous and contented family, as the reward of a life of care and toil in the rearing of their children. Now, this reward will as a rule never come. Human nature is so selfish. The bonds of charity are so relaxed nowadays that gratitude to parents on the part of children might be said to be the exception rather than the rule. And then there are so many mishaps in life that to the day of your death, dear fathers and mothers, your children will be a source of anxiety to you.

And even were your children to turn out all that you could desire, and were you surrounded in your old age with all the happiness that this world could give, this would be but a poor return for the troubles and anxieties of a lifetime. No, parents, I say again, lift up your hopes on high, and look forward to an eternal reward with God. Know that you are carrying out the great work allotted to you in life, and He himself will be your reward. This hope, and it alone, will enable you to triumph over the weaknesses of nature, will sustain you amid the anxieties of your state and will enable you to win your crown of glory in the hereafter.

SECOND SERMON—DUTIES OF PARENTS

I.

The Rearing of, and the Providing for, Their Children.

1. In my former discourse, I treated of the first great duty of parents, namely, the duty of rearing and providing for the temporal welfare of their children. And in the fulfillment of this duty, I have said, they must look forward only to a supernatural reward.

Now, when we consider parents as we usually find them, can we say that we see them discharge this great duty of rearing their children with fidelity?

Far be it from me to make a general charge against a faithful people. I am well aware of the generous, nay, often heroic sacrifices made by our Catholic parents in the upbringing and in the education of their children; but, yet, I know that many fail in fulfilling this essential duty of their state; for, otherwise how explain the cause of the number of neglected children to be found amongst us?

How many neglected little ones to be met with while their parents misapply the means that should preserve them in comfort? How many parents who squander the money God enabled them to earn instead of expending it economically for their support? How many lazy fathers who refuse to work when earning may be had? How many idle, gossiping women who allow their children to grow up in ignorance, and who seem less concerned for their welfare than for the commonest worldly matter? Far from resembling the pelican of the wilderness as did our blessed Lord, they resemble rather the ostrich, an-

other bird mentioned in Scripture as the type of callousness and hard-heartedness towards its young. And this is the complaint God Himself makes through the Prophet Jeremiah: "The fierce monsters of the deep have put forth their dugs, they have suckled their young, but the daughter of my people is *cruel as the ostrich of the desert*."

Now, the ostrich is represented as an extremely gluttonous bird. Throw it lumps of iron or brass, it devours all, it digests all; but in regard to its young it is cruel to the last degree. For, as we are told in the Book of Job, unlike every other bird, when it lays its eggs it "abandons them in the sand, without minding whether the foot may tread upon them or the wild ass may break them." If any of their little ones, brought to life by the heat of the sun, come to call their mother, "she is insensible to their call as if they were not hers."

Is not this what ill-natured fathers and mothers do? They devour, like the ostrich, the iron and the brass—the means of the family. For these they must sell or pawn to supply for their excesses and foolish expenses, whilst their poor children remain in misery; whilst they perish of hunger. "They are hardened against their young as if they were not theirs."

Cruel parents, you consider not that by thus neglecting your little ones you will be the occasion of their falling into crime. Your daughter will become a jade; your son will become a drunkard or a thief, and will bring disgrace and sorrow on your old age. "You consider not that the foot will trample on them and the wild ass will crush them."

II.

The Social Crime

2. And now, dearly beloved, the widespread prevalence in this country and in the present time of a most shocking and unnatural crime—one that cries to heaven for vengeance—compels me to speak here on a matter that I should otherwise be silent about. A high authority has included the matter of which I speak with other practices under the heading of "race suicide"; though for myself, separating this special sin from others named which don't seem to belong to the same category, I prefer to call it "homicidal selfishness."

Call it what name you will, the thing itself has but one meaning—murder. Yes, it is murder; but it is murder of a most shocking and unnatural character.

Dearly beloved, in all times and among even the most barbarous peoples the crime of paricide has been looked on as of a most atrocious nature. For it means, not the crime of imbruing one's hands in the blood of an ordinary fellow being; but the still more inhuman crime of taking the life of a parent or a child—of one holding the nearest and tenderest relations with the murderer. Now this is the crime that is included with others by ex-President Roosevelt under the designation of "race suicide," the one which I call "homicidal selfishness." It is the crime by which a parent, be it father or mother,—it may be, and often is, both—bring about the destruction of the progeny begotten of them, and this is the most cruel and cowardly manner, for the most sordid of all motives: lest they should be put to the trouble and expense of rearing it.

When the highwayman presents his revolver to your forehead and blows out your brains, though the motive is a sordid one, yet we are sometimes forced to admire the audacity of the miscreant, who often risks his own life in the enterprise; but to kill the foetus in the womb of its mother where it lies helpless and unresisting, and this from the sordid motive that the parents don't want to incur the trouble of rearing it, this has no redeeming feature in it, and it is simply the act of a monster.

3. Again, in the murder of a fellow being, whether the motive be robbery, or vengeance, or any other, there is, ordinarily at least, the chance of the victim's being able to say: "Lord have mercy on me," before he is hurried to God's tribunal in judgment; but in the crime of which I speak, even this chance is withheld, and the unnatural parent deliberately robs his child of eternal beatitude.

In the course of my ministry I have met the case of an unhappy young woman, who to save herself from shame, carefully baptized her infant, and then dashed its head against the wall; but it remained for this heartless twentieth century to teach how the thing can be done scientifically, and how at the same time, the soul of the hapless victim may be robbed of the chance of eternal life.

O brethren, the ostrich is called cruel by Scripture because she abandoned her eggs on the sand, and because she is insensible to the cries of her little ones calling for food, "as if they were not hers." Even "the fierce monsters of the deep put forth their dugs to suckle their young," but the daughter of God's people, the Christian mother, insensible alike to the promptings of nature and the pleadings of her

child at least for the supernatural life of its soul, takes that innocent babe and consigns it to eternal death.

4. And this carries me to a point further still. When I was a boy at school I had as class fellow, a young man of good talents, but vain and self-seeking, and who was never a favorite with his fellow students. This young man afterwards went on for the medical profession, emigrated to Australia, and became a quack doctor, as they call them. He had an extensive practice of a certain kind, and didn't stick at performing "unlawful operations." He was found out at last, brought to trial, convicted and hanged, as I was afterwards assured by an honorable member of one of the Colonial Parliaments. "Oh, yes, father" he said to me, "we strung him up." That's the way they do things in Australia.

Brethren, if the laws of this state were carried out strictly; or, rather, if evidence could be hunted up against miscreants who follow a like trade, there is more than one man or one woman in this city who, I will not say, should swing for his or her criminal practice; for, I believe, the penalty attaching to the performance of "unlawful operations" is not capital here, but who should be consigned to the penitentiary, there to expiate in shame and toil during the period of their natural lives their unlawful and inhuman deeds.

5. And now, dearly beloved, to conclude; let me exhort you to be solicitous for the health, bodily and spiritual, of your children. Watch over and provide for their temporal needs, that fulfilling this first duty of your state, you may be in a position to discharge the higher and more important duties of

Christian parents, of training them in the virtues and practices of the Christian life.

THIRD SERMON—DUTIES OF PARENTS

The Training of Their Children.

I.

The Mind.

1. I have already addressed you on the first great duty of parents, that of providing for the material well-being of their children. Today I come to address you on the second of the parental duties, that of instructing; i. e., of training them in the Christian life by word and example.

But before doing so let me observe with regard to the former duty, that a general law of nature obliges all generative beings to exercise a like providence towards their offspring. And I would have you observe that the instinct which impels irrational creatures to provide for their young is the most deep-seated and universal which governs them. See the providence exercised by the smallest bird or insect in regard to its little ones. Does it not seem, once it has begotten offspring, to live but to provide for them? Even the most savage beast will suffer hunger and thirst and expose itself to the most frightful dangers in order to procure for them their proper nourishment. It would be ill-becoming in man, then, to be wanting in parental care and providence; in him who is so raised above the irrational creatures, whose responsibility to God is so great, and whose

offspring, in childhood, is so destitute of the means of self-preservation.

But the duty of which I come to speak today is peculiar to human parents, and this by reason of the inability, morally speaking, of their offspring to attain their end without the special helps of instruction.

Placed as the connecting link, so to speak, between the animal creation, on the one hand, and the angelic world on the other, man occupies a unique position among creatures. He is ordained by God to the possession of eternal life, a consummation to which he attains by his personal efforts here below, conducted and seconded by grace. This being so, he needs that his mind be furnished with the knowledge of God's law, which is his rule of life, and that his will be trained in habits of virtue.

Now the mind of the child is at birth as an unwritten page, while the will, being a blind faculty, as the philosophers say, follows its direction. All the training of the child, therefore; all its knowledge, must be taken in from what it sees and what it hears. This is so true that long years before the little being attains the use of reason indelible impressions are made upon it through the senses, though it be unconscious of them at the time. Its character is to a certain extent moulded, good or bad dispositions are formed which, like seeds, take root, and germinate, so as in after years to develop into settled traits of character.

The father and mother are the natural instructors of their children, just as they are their natural protectors and providers. The affection that the child has for its parent, added to the love

that it feels instictively the parent has for it, makes the little one receive the words of its father or mother as so many oracles of wisdom. Their sayings will be treasured up in its memory. It will take kindly after the example given it; and thus habits of virtue or vice will be formed before that little being can apprehend the good of the one or the evil of the other.

What an obligation have not parents, then, to give good example to their children—to say nothing, and to do nothing in their presence but what savors of morality and religion. What an obligation have they not to train their minds and to bend their wills while still in the pliancy of childhood to the practice of virtuous deeds.

This obligation God Himself inculcates in Scripture: "Lay up these, My words, in your hearts, and hang them for a memorial from your hands, and place them between your eyes. Teach your children that they meditate upon them, when you sit in your house, and when you walk on the way, and when you lie down and rise; that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land sworn to your fathers that He would give them as long as heaven hangeth over earth."—(Deut. VI, 7.)

2. Is it thus we see parents universally do in our days?

I am well aware, indeed, of the many beautiful examples of parental virtue that we have amongst us; of the beautiful example of generosity and piety, ordinarily exhibited by our good Catholic people; but, alas, do we not find, on the other hand, only too many parents the corrupters rather of their children? They frequently say bad words and allow

others to say bad words in the presence of their little ones. These words received into the impressionable hearts of these children become as a leaven of corruption to their whole after lives.

But if the language of such parents works such evil to their children, what shall I say of their vicious conduct and example? A father, for instance, comes home drunk to his family. What acts is such a man not capable of doing? What, in fact, do his children not see him do while in this state; and would not his unseemly conduct lead one to believe that he considered himself wholly irresponsible as to what he said or did before them?

"Cursed of God be the sandal-giver," says Our Lord; "it were better for him that he had never been born!" "He that shall scandalize one of those little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were tied round his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea." And, oh, if such anathemas fall from the lips of our Saviour on the ordinary scandal-giver, what curses are there not in store for him who abuses the position of responsibility in which he is placed by God to bring destruction on these dear children?

II.

The Heart.

1. The heart of the little child is as a good soil, which, when cared for and cultivated, is bountiful in its produce. Dig into the rich alluvial soil; cultivate it; put into it good seed in the proper season; let the warm sun of heaven shine upon it; let the fructifying rains be showered upon it; let the moisture and the warmth penetrate it; a genial atmosphere play

over it; in a few months you will gather the rich harvest of waving grain to glad you during the winter. And so with the young. Form them to virtue; teach them the holy truths of religion; sow the good seed of the Kingdom of God in the rich soil of their hearts; let the rich fertilizing graces from heaven fall upon them; let them grow up in the generous atmosphere of a bright and virtuous home; teach them the practice of piety, of charity, of self-denial, a love for truth, for justice, for chastity; your old age will be blessed with a loving and virtuous family.

2. I have likened the hearts of the young to a rich soil, but a soil that needs cultivation. Take, on the other hand, the bounteous earth that I have spoken of and give it over to neglect and fallow. Turn it not with the plow or the cultivator. Let the winds of heaven carry to it their burden of noxious seeds. Scatter upon it yourself the tare, and the cockle, and the scutch, and the bramble; in time it will yield forth its crop of noxious weeds. And these in turn will shed abroad their baneful influence on the adjoining meadows.

And so with the youth brought up in ignorance and vice. His soul is a generous but uncultivated soil. The nature that under more favorable conditions might yield the richest and most bounteous fruits; the soul that with care and culture might sparkle with the brightest gems of virtue, produces now but the rankling weeds of vice and crime. The more generous it is, the greater are the excesses to which its own impetuosity transports it, and the young man or woman becomes in time a plague to society, diffusing on all sides the stench of scandal; while within he or

she is a smouldering firebrand of hell, tortured with passion and remorse, and needing but the stroke of death to burst into the lurid torch of the damned soul.

3. And here let me say a word or two pertinent to the matter on which I am speaking. It has often been a subject of surprise to me to find grown-up boys and girls who have never been to confession, and who are often kept from Mass on Sundays on the silliest pretexts. If you charge the parents of these children with this fact they will ride off on the plea that they are yet young and innocent.

Now, it should be known to you that a child of seven years has ordinarily the use of reason. Such a child is capable of committing sin; and, unhappily, only too often does fall into mortal sin at that tender age. What, then, are we to think of parents who allow their children to scamper about like untrained colts and fillies till they are ten, twelve, or more years old without ever once having knelt at the feet of a priest, and without having been taught the obligation of attending Mass on Sundays? Is it any wonder that scandals are afterwards found to be rife among a Christian people, and that those children when grown to be men and women absent themselves for years from the Sacraments, when in their tender years their consciences were allowed by heedless parents to rot and fester in sin and evil habits? A child, as soon as it knows the difference between right and wrong, should be treated as a grown-up man or woman. It should be sent regularly to Confession. It should be taught the obligation of Sunday's Mass, and be gradually inured to all the practices of Christian piety.

4. Let me conclude, then, by exhorting you, my dear fathers and mothers, to a faithful discharge of this duty towards your children. It is your greatest duty in life—the one for which you will be called to strictest account hereafter. Convinced of the supreme importance to your children of a thorough training in the Christian law and practice, spare no pains in giving them this training. By so doing you will have responded to your high vocation as Christian parents, and you will have the reward here of seeing your little ones grow up in grace and virtue, "like olive plants around the table of the Lord"; and, hereafter, of hearing from the lips of the Eternal Judge the words of divine commendation: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things I will place thee over many. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—DUTIES OF PARENTS

"He that loveth his son frequently chastiseth him, that he may rejoice in his latter end and not groan after the doors of his neighbors.

"He that instructeth his son shall be praised in him and shall glory in him in the midst of them of his household . . . .

"A horse not broken becometh stubborn; and a child left to himself will become headstrong . . . .

"Give thy son his way: he will make thee afraid; play with him; he will make thee sorrowful . . . .

"Bow down his neck while he is young, and beat his sides while he is a child; lest he grow stubborn and regard thee not: and so be a sorrow of heart to thee."
—(Eccl. XXX, v, etc.)

The Correcting of Their Children.

1. In former instructions I spoke to you on certain duties of parents in regard to their children, the duties, namely, of providing for them, and of training them in the practices of a Christian life. Now, there are other duties of parents in regard to the same children that I desire to call your attention to, and I devote this discourse particularly to the exposition of a third parental duty—that of correcting them.

And, in the first place, I would ask you to observe from my text that the Holy Spirit does not seem much in favor of those soft methods in the upbringing of children so much in vogue nowadays; when parents through a false and mistaken affection allow their children to have their own way in almost

everything; while they themselves, after abdicating the position of authority which nature and religion have imposed on them, come in time to be treated as only secondary personages in their own households.

Now this duty becomes necessary, first of all, because of the diseased condition of our nature consequent on *the fall*. Were our wills upright as were those of our first parents in the state or original innocence, parental correction, speaking in the ordinary sense of the word, would be unnecessary. For it would need but that the mind should know what was right in action in order that the will should tend to it and execute it. But, like the earth cursed by God, when left to itself it brings forth only thorns and thistles, "the thoughts and heart of man are prone to evil from his youth." Leave the child to its own devices; "Give thy son his way,"—without a special providence of God, he will discover vicious habits, which will grow with his growth, and in time become to him as a second nature. He will become headstrong, and lazy, and proud, and selfish. He will develop sensual instincts and depraved habits, which incline him ever to the level of the brute creation.

Add to this that society in our days is so corrupt that it is hard for the young soul to escape the contagion of bad example. Let a young man or woman be ever so pure and well disposed, his or her virtue will be put to a severe trial by association with the world. In cities, especially, where so many allurements are held out to the inexperienced heart, the dangers of corruption are multiplied. See the many baits that are held out for our boys and girls in the public ways, and in places of amusement; the scandals coming from the older generation; the

temptations to gambling, to drunkenness, to impurity and other excesses. I will not speak to you of the many agents of the devil—depraved men and women who seem to devote their life to the trade of bringing souls to perdition.

3. Who is to counteract those evil influences coming from without and within, and to direct the young heart in the observance of the law of the Lord? Whose watchful eye is to detect the first symptoms of evil, and whose duty to apply the salutary remedy of correction before it takes root in the heart? It is yours, parents, on whom God has laid the tremendous responsibility of watching over your children and directing them in the path of virtue.

Do not imagine that this work of providence and correction is to be done solely in the school, whether by lay teachers, or Brothers, or Nuns. Their duty consists in great part in imparting to them secular instruction. Do not imagine either that you can throw over on the clergy, whether secular or regular, a duty that primarily belongs to you; that accompanies you everywhere and at every moment of your life; that "cleaves to your bones." On the faithful discharge of this duty your salvation depends; and should you fail in it, even though you should succeed in every other enterprise in your life, your career will be a failure before God, and you will merit a severe punishment. See the chastisement inflicted on the high priest Heli, spoken of in Scripture. This man, although he otherwise led an edifying life, neglected to correct his wicked sons, who gave scandal in the sight of all Israel. And for this alone, disasters came upon his whole family. His sons were cut down by the sword. Himself

with other members of his family, died violent deaths; and the dignity of the high priesthood was forever taken away from his family. For, as the Lord's message was conveyed to him by the prophet, Samuel, "Behold, I do a thing in Israel, and whosoever shall hear it, both his ears shall tingle. In that day I will raise up against Heli all the things I have spoken concerning his house. I will begin, and I will make an end. For I have foretold unto him that I will judge his house forever, for iniquity; because he knew that his sons did wickedness, and did not chastise them. Therefore, have I sworn to the house of Heli, that the iniquity of his house shall not be expiated with victims, nor offerings, forever."

SECOND SERMON—DUTIES OF PARENTS

I

Mistakes in Correction

1. In my former discourse I treated of the duty of parents in the correcting of their children. Let me continue the treatment of the same subject.

Now in the carrying out of this duty of correction parents are liable to fall into mistakes, and this in two ways. There are some parents who are most careful and conscientious in the training and correction of their children while they are young; but when they grow up to boyhood and girlhood, they consider they are now of sufficient age to take care of themselves, and so they relax almost entirely their vigilance and government over them. They allow their boys to remain out to late hours at night; to go where

they will; to associate with whom they please. Even the signs of drink on them occasionally when they return home, or other more degrading symptoms, do not alarm them. In the same way they relax their vigilance and government over their daughters, are not alarmed at seeing them remain long hours away from home on a Sunday or other evenings; do not take alarm at noticing that they manifest a decided inclination for frequenting alone young men's society. Rather, they are pleased at seeing that their daughters are attractive to young men, and that they have admirers amongst them.

Foolish parents, you dream not of the evil that is brewing in the hearts of your boys and girls, and that later on in life will blast for you the hopes of earlier years.

Now it should be known to you that of all periods of life, there is none so dangerous to virtue as that in which the child breaks forth into the young man or woman, and none in which so many of the one and of the other sex come to grief. A celebrated English author, writing of this period in boys, say, from seventeen to twenty-three, calls it "the hateful age." And so it is in some respects. The young person come to this period of life is neither a man nor a boy. He is a man in his pretentions. He puts on the airs of a man. He thinks himself a superb fellow. He is wiser than his elders, more learned than his teachers. He talks tall and takes advice with impatience; while at the same time he has neither the experience nor the mature knowledge of a man. His information is undigested; his views of things are crude and narrow; he is but a boy in wisdom; and with all his fine pretensions he makes huge blunders and is apt to plunge into a

course of life which will be ruinous to him in his whole after career.

In the same way, never does the girl need the prudent and firm guidance of her parents; never is the experience gained by mature years more needful than in that unsteady age when the girl breaks into womanhood. In the first blush of her womanly charms she is courted by admirers, whose importunate attentions are enough to put the steadiest virtue to the test. Her virtue is the object of attack by every young libertine of the other sex; and those attentions only too often provoke in her girlish heart the unholy fumes of impure love.

Ah, my brethren, how many a sad tale could be told of the young woman who preserved her virginal innocence unsullied up to this age, who was an angel in thought, but who became degraded, lost to honor, and virtue by associating with young men, and sunk into impurities in after life, even as the hog wallows in the mire. Take heed, therefore, dear parents, of the conduct of your boys and girls during the unsteady period of youth; and remember that at no period of life do they require the firm, yet gentle, government of parents more than at that age when the strong passions of youth first begin to rage within their souls.

2. Another mistake often made by parents is that they allow their children to grow up to an advanced period before they send them to school or instruct them in their religious duties. Like colts that are let free to gallop about the meadows, these children are allowed to indulge their wild youth, sometimes, till they are ten or twelve years of age. Contrary to the advice of the Holy Spirit, they give

them their liberty "and wink at their devices." Is it any wonder that in after years these parents reap the consequences of their folly? Like horses overmatured before they are put to harness, these children "will become headstrong and bring sorrow of heart" to their wretched parents.

II

The Arab System

It is said of the Arabs that they have a system in the training of their horses quite different in principle to that which obtains in these countries. Here we leave our young horses on the hills till they come to maturity, and then we break them in; that is to say, we break them of their habits of wild liberty which they enjoyed for the first few years of their life. The Arab horses, on the contrary, are trained from their birth. They are reared in their master's tent; they grow up under his fostering care; become the companions of his children; are trained to habits of gentleness and obedience till, as a result, they become as docile as dogs.

Some of you have perhaps seen those trained Arab steeds, have admired their marvelous docility. To see the Arab on his courser; horse and rider, do they not seem as if they were one sentient being? The Arab, himself a horseman from his youth, seems at home in the saddle. In perfect confidence, with reins lying loose on his courser's neck, he governs him by word. At full gallop with his long gun he can pick off the swallow in its flight.

In the rearing of children the Arab system is to be preferred, where the little ones are domesticated from their childhood; are trained in the habits of

piety; are taught obedience to lawful authority; and the faithful observance of the ordinary Christian duties, rather than the system of breaking them in after they are allowed to grow up to an advanced age. The child, as soon as it has come to the use of reason, as soon as it knows the difference between right and wrong, should be treated as a grown up man or woman. It should be taught the obligation of Sunday's Mass. It should be sent regularly to Confession. It should be impressed with the importance of morning and evening prayers; of obedience to superiors; of control over its growing passions; and, in a word, it should be gradually inured to all the practices of Christian piety.

3. And here let me say a word or two on a matter that has often struck me forcibly. It is the appalling heedlessness of parents in regard to the companionships their children form, and to the occupations which fill in the hours that they are away from home. Have they any conception of the acts that are often done, and of the scandals that are given and received during those hours that their children are at play; of the number of lives that are blighted as a result of what they see and hear? Let me tell you that the period of life from ten to fourteen or fifteen is often the one of greatest temptation in the life of boy or girl: that it is precisely at this age that had been learned those vices that bring about the shattered reputations and the disastrous failures that we witness in those boys and girls in after life; and that the depravity that is growing amongst the younger generation is in some places appalling.

What will become of those undisciplined youth in after years? What road will they take in life?

You know not; I cannot tell. No one can divine. Even the Wise Man in the Book of Proverbs is obliged to acknowledge that the future of such youth is a mystery to him. "Three things appear difficult to me," says he, "the course of an eagle in his flight; the way of a serpent on a rock; and the path of a ship in the midst of the ocean; but the fourth is entirely unknown to me—the way of a man in his youth." (Prov. xxx. 18. 19.)

Yes, a young man, and the same can be said of a young woman, has, in the motions of his passions all the rapidity and impetuosity of the eagle in his flight. He has in the variety of his desires, in the giddiness of his inclinations, all the sinuosity and all the twistings of a serpent. He has in the different thoughts that divide him, and in the multitude of objects to which he is carried, all the movements of a vessel beaten by waves and storms. In such a situation how will he guide himself without a master? It is yours, dear fathers and mothers, to rule this eagle in his flight. It is yours to trace for this serpent the course he is to take. It is yours to tack safely into port this vessel surrounded by rocks and quicksands, and beaten incessantly by storms.

4. You have then, fathers and mothers, the responsibilty; nature has imposed it on you; God has imposed it on you; you yourselves have voluntarily undertaken the tremendous responsibilty, not only of rearing and providing for the temporal wants of your children, but also of instructing and edifying them, and of watching over them to preserve them from moral harm. Aye, and you must correct them too, and severely, if necessary, but without passion. If it be necessary, I say, you must "beat their sides

while they are children" that you may bend their wills beneath the yoke of obedience.

If you fulfill those duties with care and fidelity you will obtain the blessing of God for yourselves and for them; and He will say unto you as He said to Abraham of old: "Because you have been faithful, and have not spared your child for the love of Me, I will lay blessing upon your family." Your children will be virtuous. You will gain as a recompense of your cares repose of conscience, a happy old age, and eternal beatitude hereafter.

THIRD SERMON—THE MERCY OF GOD.

"There was a certain ruler whose son was sick at Capharnaum. He having heard that Jesus was come from Judea into Galilee went to Him and prayed Him to come down and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. . . . Jesus saith to him: 'go thy way; thy son liveth." John IV. 46-53.

I.

The Old Dispensation

1. What are we to admire in this Gospel, dearly beloved, is not so much the tender solicitude of this good ruler for his poor child, nor yet his lively faith in our Lord's supernatural power; but, rather the ready acquiescence of the Saviour in the petition of this pagan, and His kindliness and mercy to the sufferer.

But now, does not the incident related in this Gospel appear very appropriate to the circumstances of our presence here today? How many poor sick

souls are there not in this parish and district whose state calls loudly for a cure? And the father of his people, your faithful pastor, comes to ask of Jesus Christ the the grace of a mission—those strong, healing graces which the Physician of souls is wont to pour out so copiously on an occasion such as this. And I have no doubt that the Saviour will graciously respond to his request as readily as He did to this good ruler. and that the mission will result in the restoration to spiritual health of many, who up to now were threatened with the eternal loss of their souls.

This leads me to speak to you in this, my opening address, on a subject well worthy the life-long and grateful remembrance of us all; namely, on the mercy of God to sinners.

Mercy! What a soul-affecting word! How grateful to the poor culprit overwhelmed with the consciousness of his guilt! The world-famed poet has only paid it a just meed of praise when he says:

> "The quality of mercy is not strained,
> It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
> Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
> It blesseth him that gives and him that takes;
> 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest. It becomes
> The throned monarch better than his crown.
> His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
> The attribute to awe and majesty,
> Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings.
> But mercy is above this sceptered sway;
> It is an attribute to God Himself."

Yes, it is an attribute to God Himself. And how has not this attribute of mercy been shown in all God's dealings with sinners in the past?

2. The history of the Old Testament points to innumerable instances of God's mercy to sinners when they sought Him in the sincerity of their hearts. How many times did not His chosen people turn their backs upon him and transgress His laws? And after all that, when they returned to Him and besought Him for pardon, did He not lay aside all thought of resentment against them and remember only their former friendship and service?

See also how he showed mercy to the Ninevites. They were a pagan people, and for their sins God resolved to destroy their city. But at the preaching of the prophet, Jonas, they were terrified and converted. The king commanded a general fast to be observed by all the people. They covered themselves with sackcloth. They prayed with all their might. At the sight of their penitence the heart of God was softened. He turned aside the shafts of His anger that were ready to destroy them, and spared their city and themselves.

If from instances of mercy shown by God to whole peoples, we turn to those shown to individuals, here again, how blessed the record? See King David, who fell into the crimes of adultery and murder. Scarcely had he returned to himself and cried out in compunction of heart, "I have sinned," when God sent the prophet Nathan to him to announce his pardon. See, again, Manasses, king of Juda, a man steeped in all manner of crimes. At his repentance he is not only received to pardon, but even raised again by God to the throne he had filled so unworthily before.

It was in this character of most indulgent father that God loved to be known to the Jews. It was in

this character that He inspired the prophets to represent Him most frequently in their addresses to the people. "Oh, the Lord, the Lord God," cries out Moses in a transport of gratitude, "merciful, and gracious, and patient, and of much compassion, and true; who keepeth mercy unto thousands; who taketh away wickedness, and iniquity, and sin!" Hence, the Psalmist says of Him: "His justice is from the abyss; but His mercy is spread over all His works." "The whole earth," he says again, "is full of the mercy of the Lord." Thus, finally, in that lovely psalm that He inspired to the penitent King, after preparing him for forgiveness by sentiments of profound contrition: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy, and according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my iniquities; for I know my sin, and my iniquity is always before me," He takes care, in the concluding verses, to have it promulgated to all posterity that "a contrite and humble heart He will never despise."

II.

The Law of Grace

But if the goodness and mercy of God were everywhere manifested in the Old Testament, which, after all, was the "law of fear," it is in the New, that the Almighty gives full scope ot the promptings of His love, and that its effects are more especially manifested.

The whole scheme of the Incarnation, is it not a grand manifestation of God's mercy to sinners? Consider the whole public life of Christ; was it not spent on behalf of sinners? "I am come," He says, "to call, not the just, but sinners, to repentance."

And in fulfilling this noble mission, does He not try by every device to encourage them to come to Him and to have confidence in Him? And so remarkable was His conduct towards them that one of the principal accusations brought against Him by His enemies—accusations, mark you, that He never tried to refute—was that He was "the friend of publicans and sinners."

His loveliest and most soul-inspiring parables are those in which He represents to us His love for sinners. Thus, He pictures Himself at one time as the Good Shepherd come down from the Heavenly Country in search of His lost sheep. And leaving the ninety-nine in the desert, He wanders among thickets and briars; in lonely dells and over rough mountain sides; till at last He finds her. And taking her upon His shoulders He carries her back in triumph, and invites His friends to "rejoice with Him; for that He has found His sheep that was lost."

Again, He is the Good Samaritan come down from the holy city of Jerusalem to pour oil and wine upon the wounds of poor stricken humanity, fallen among the infernal robbers. Or, He is the tender father receiving back again His prodigal son, and welcoming him to the home he had so unworthily abandoned.

You all remember that famous parable — the insolence, the ingratitude, the selfishness of that young cur; the tenderness, the grief of his aged father; how the prodigal grasping his money-bags, departed into a far-distant country, where he squandered his patrimony in gambling and in the company of bad women. Being in a short time reduced to the extremity of want, he is compelled to hire himself out to one of the inhabitants of that strange country, where he is sent to herd swine.

So wretched does he become that he would fain satisfy his hunger with the coarse husks the swine did eat.

In his sad plight he entered into himself and he recollected how many servants there were in his father's house who were happy and well-treated, while he perished of hunger. At last he resolved within himself, and he said: "I will go to my father, and I will say to him: 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee. I am not worthy to be called thy child. Make me as one of thy hired servants'," and he set out on his journey.

Meantime, the grief-stricken father every day scanned the horizon seeking the return of his lost son. And one day, seeing him in the distance, he recognized him in spite of his haggard features and tattered garments, and he ran to him, and threw himself upon his neck and kissed him. And he put shoes on his feet, and he put a ring upon his finger, and he covered him with the first robe, and he ordered the fatted calf to be killed, and that all should make merry, for that, as he said: "My son was lost, and he has been found; he was dead, and he has come to life again". It is all, my brethren, but the elaborate portrayal of God's mercy as shown to repentant sinners.

III.

The Magdalen

1. The sacred writers of the New Testament seem never wearied with relating the wonders of love and mercy of the Saviour towards poor sinners. Thus, they represent Him, at one time, as sitting on Jacob's well, faint from fatigue and hunger, wait-

ing for the Samaritan woman to convert and save her. At another, as undertaking a long journey in order to cure the daughter of an idolatrous woman possessed by a devil. Now, we see Him deliver from sin and from the accusations of her enemies the woman taken in adultery. Again, He promises salvation to Zachaeus, the chief of the publicans of Jericho, on the instant that he in his heart resolves to restore his ill-gotten goods and become converted.

2. But perhaps the most conspicuous instance of our Lord's mercy to sinners is that which is recorded in the Gospel concerning the glorious penitent, **Saint Mary Magdalen.**

She was a woman of good family, well instructed according to the notions of her time, and brought up in the traditions of a pious Jewish household. She had even greater facilities for becoming virtuous than most of the Jewish maidens of her time. For she lived at no great distance from the temple of Jerusalem, at that time the center of the one true religion in the world, the home of sanctity in which God Himself dwelt and was worshipped with supreme magnificence. But it was her misfortune to allow herself to be hurried along in a mad career of indulgence of impure passion. I refrain from describing further that career to which the advantages of leisure, wealth, and beauty, only acted as incentives. Suffice it to say she was commonly known according to the words of the Gospel, by the appelation of "the sinner," and that she was a woman "possessed by seven devils," who are the presiding patrons of the seven deadly sins.

It was while the Saviour was dining with the

Pharisees of Naim, that this woman, stricken with the consciousness of her awful state, made her way into the apartment where Jesus was. And heedless of the uncharitable judgments of those present, with a boldness begotten of deep contrition, she cast herself at His feet. She bathed them with a deluge of tears, and dried them with her long flowing tresses.

No more is required. The preventing grace of Jesus Christ had brought her to her present state of tears and regret. The "fountains of the great deep" of the infinitely charitable heart of the Saviour are moved with compassion towards her. He cannot restrain the outpourings of His generous love; and, forgetting all the infamies of the wicked past, He mingles the tears of His compassion with those of her sorrow. He extends the hand of forgiveness over her, and pronounces those words of absolution, that her sins are entirely pardoned her, and that she is preferred in the esteem of her God to him who had prided Himself on His life-long fidelity to the Law. "Oh, the Lord, the Lord God! merciful, and gracious, and patient, and of much compassion, and true, who keepeth mercy unto thousands, who taketh away iniquity, and wickedness and sin." Who would not admire our Saviour's kindness to repentant sinners? Who would not take heart, in spite of his miseries, and come with unbounded confidence in this God of Mercy?

IV.

The Priest in the Confessional

1. But, dearly beloved, what shows the Saviour's kindliness to be truly infinite and worthy of His Divinity is this, that this "merciful and compassionate

God" has not circumscribed the exercise of His mercy to any time, or place, or people; but has wished that it be manifested to all tribes, and tongues, and generations, even to the end of time. To this effect it was that our blessed Saviour, before His departure from this world, was pleased to institute an order of men gifted with His own power and animated with His spirit, who should exercise in His behalf this quality of mercy towards their fellow men.

This order, which in some manner perpetuates the benign presence of Christ among men, and which still carries on the work of His ministry, is the priesthood of the holy Catholic Church. And thus the Saviour, on the day of the Resurrection, breathed upon His apostles, who were the representatives of the priesthood of all future ages, and said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them;" and by that mysterious sign, and by the efficacy of those words, He gave power to those men, and through them to their successors after them to the end of time, the power all divine, and the jurisdiction, which He Himself possessed, to release souls from sin.

This power, as all the world knows, is that which is exercised by priests in the sacred tribunal of penance. Thus it is that, no matter how wicked you may have been in the course of your past life; no matter how deeply you may have fallen; had you given as much scandal as Mary the sinner; if you take heart and rise as she from your sins, and come to Christ in the person of His minister with sentiments of contrition, fear not; the absolution of God's representative will restore you to His grace,

and will give your poor troubled soul the sweet feeling of peace.

Nay, more, my brethren, and what is no less consoling is, that this God of mercy has not only gifted His priesthood with the divine power of forgiving sins: He has, furthermore, communicated to them His spirit of mercy in dealing with sinners; so that, whether the priest be by nature a man of stern, severe temperament, or of an unforgiving nature; from the moment that he sits in the tribunal of penance, he is reminded that he is there the representative of a God of boundless mercy, who was the "friend of publicans and sinners;" of a God who, not only forgave the repentant Peter, but raised him to the dignity of head of His Church; who made Saul, the blasphemer, and cruel persecutor of His people, to be a "vessel of election" to carry the glory of His name among the gentiles; who made the generous Magdalen the favorite amongst His followers, honored her with the special privilege of being an apostle to the apostles themselves; the first witness of His Resurrection; and who afterwards raised her to the sublimest heights of contemplation.

Such is the power of the priesthood; and such must be the spirit that should animate the faithful priest in the discharge of his spiritual functions. And though he be a judge of souls, still he must remember that he is a judge of mercy, and the representative of a God who knew but to forgive, and to compassionate the fallen.

Such, dearly beloved, is our mission among you to-day, sent by the Church which carries on the benign work of Jesus Christ on earth. Like our Di-

vine Master, we can say: "We are come to call, not the just but sinners to repentance." Come then beloved sinnners, to the exercises of the mission. "Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation." If up to the present time you have led bad lives, and have disgraced your Christian calling: fear not; God sends you in those days an extraordinary grace in this mission which is now open among you. Be not held back by the remembrance of your past sins. Only prepare your souls by prayer and penance, and "If your sins were as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow; and if they were as crimson, they shall be made white as wool." Washed and made clean in the "Blood of the Lamb," you will be enabled to walk worthily on earth, and will be prepared for reception into the company of the saints, rejoicing with Jesus Christ, who reigns, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for all eternity.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—THE DUTIES OF CHILDREN

(Preached in St. Peter's Church, The Dalles, Oregon, on "Mother's Day," 1924)

"*Honor thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be long-lived in the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee.*" (*Ex. XX-12*)

I.

Love

It has become the vogue in these days to celebrate not merely the old-fashioned birthday feasts of different members of the family, but in widening circles, other family feasts also. Thus we have "Mothers' Day,," and "Fathers' Day," and "Grandmas' Day," and "Grandpas' Day," and "Children's Day," and so forth. And on those days the members of the family gather together to partake of social and family joys.

These celebrations are good and to be commended; since they promote good feeling and charity among those who are bound together by close ties of kinship.

But it seems to me that they often fail in their object, and from this, that they are founded, ordinarily, on mere human sentiment. And we are becoming only too familiar with the spectacle of both parents and children neglecting the great family duties commanded them by God and nature.

Thus, while fathers and mothers allow every liberty to their children, and give way to their every whim, they fail utterly in their duty of giving those

same children a Christian and religious training. On the other hand, children who are wont, when those family feasts come round, to make lavish gifts to their parents and other relatives, on other days of the year are wayward and disrespectful to them; nay, often treat them with the greatest harshness and cruelty.

I purpose, therefore, to speak to you today on the duties of children toward their parents. These are: love, respect, obedience, and service. The first of these duties is love. It is founded on the same principles as that we owe to God.

We are obliged to love God above all things, as our Creator, our Sovereign Lord, and our Father by excellence. But after Him, we ought to love above all others those whom Divine Providence employed to give us being.

We must love our neighbor as ourselves. Now, who touches us so closely as our father and mother? We ought to love those who love us. After the Heavenly Father, who loves us as our parents? They love us often to folly: even so far as to sacrifice for us all that they hold dear in the world, and, only too often, their own salvation. We ought to love those who have done us good. And who, after God, have done us so much good as our parents?

Enter a little, my dear Brethren, into the detail of what you have received from your parents, and what they have undergone for you. Your mother, did she not bear you for nine months in her bosom with extreme troubles and disgusts? Did she not give you birth at the peril even of her own life? What cares and vigils to rear you till you were, say, five years old? And all through your life how did

she not follow you with loving care and tenderness? Who so rejoiced in your good fortune; and who so sympathised with you when sickness and sorrow overtook you? Oh, yes; the mother's love is the most Christlike of all the loves: the most generous and self-sacrificing. See how it was exemplified in that Irish mother who gave her heart's blood to nourish her starving child.

It was in the famine times when she, like thousands of others, fled from the fated land. The ship on which she was borne was driven on the rocks, where she broke in two. It was many days before the gale subsided so as to allow the pilots to come on board. They found her a death ship, with apparently not a living soul aboard. However, it seemed to them that they heard the crying of a child. They entered the state-room from which the cries proceeded, to find indeed a baby alive. But what a sight! The mother lay in death with her breasts slashed open to feed her starving baby with her heart's blood when they went dry through hardship and starvation. Oh, yes, there's nothing so Christlike on earth as a mother's love.

And your father, did he not toil for you continually? Did he not bear the languor of heat and the rigor of cold to procure you the necessary food and clothing? What can you return to him for so many benefits? Will you refuse him your heart, your love, your tenderness, your affections? If so, you would be harder than iron, and more insensible than the rocks. And could it be that nature bring forth such a monster as a child who does not love its father and mother? Yes, my friends, it brings forth every day and in great numbers those horrid monsters, those denatured children, who far from loving their

parents, hate them! who cannot either see them, or support them; who desire their death; who have their eyes open only on the inheritance they look for from them; who are kept with difficulty from laying on them a parricidal hand. How many sad examples of such have we not seen? O detestible crime! crime which no punishment could expiate; and which would seem impossible if experience did not prove it only too real and true.

II.

Respect

The second duty of children towards their parents is respect. This respect consists in an interior esteem and veneration of their persons, and in different exterior marks which they ought to give of this esteem and this veneration. They ought to have a great deference for their sentiments, for their advice, for their commands. They ought to hide their lightest faults with the greatest care, and remember the curse that fell on one of the sons of Noah for having been wanting in this duty.

"Honor thy father and thy mother," says God to us, "that thou mayest be long-lived in the land that the Lord thy God shall give thee." "He who honors his father," the Bible continues, "shall live a long time: and he who honors his mother shall amass riches." Children should never reproach their father or mother on account of their faults, or make them known to anyone.

The honor of parents, as well as their shame, descends upon their children. If it is necessary to make representations to them, it should be done with humility and submission, and in respectful terms.

They should bear with an invincible patience their bad humors and their imperfections. They must never allow to escape from them rude, angry, or arrogant words, and with greater reason contemptuous or injurious ones.

But is it thus that so many ill-reared and impious children treat their parents? children who look upon their fathers and mothers as if they were their servants: who scarcely deign to give them the name of father or mother? Yes, unhappily it is. As long as they hope for something from them they keep within bounds. But when they become their own masters by a donation, or by a contract of marriage, they treat them with the greatest insolence. Hear, then, denatured children, what the Holy Ghost says to you in Scripture. "Because you despised your parents, and insulted them, in place of rendering them the respect you owe them, you shall be cursed by God: The ravens shall pluck out your eyes; and birds of prey shall devour your carcass: because your death shall be shameful, and you shall be deprived of the advantage of sepulture."

This is what happened to the detestable Absolom, the son of David. His father loved him, and perhaps too much. This young man hoped for his father's death that he might mount the throne of Israel; but as the term appeared to him too long, he formed a conspiracy against him. He declared war upon him: shamefully dishonored him; and was on the point of taking from him his life together with his kingdom. But the justice of God could not allow such a crime to go unpunished. The criminal was overcome, and his whole army put to flight, and as he fled from battle his long hair was caught in the branches of an oak tree and he was held suspended, till Joab,

the general of the king's army, coming upon him, transpierced his body with many thrusts of a lance, and he was buried as a malefactor under a great mound of stones.

St. Bonaventure relates an event which is not less tragic: and although it has not the authority of the Sacred Text, it ceases not to be true. And this great man deserves well that we give faith to his words. He tells us that a father, having despoiled himself of all his goods in order to place his son in an advantageous position, fell at last into extreme misery, and was obliged to beg. He came sometimes to the house of his ungrateful son, who repelled him in a strange manner. One day he came to him whilst he was at table with his wife. When he perceived him, he said: "Behold our old beggar who is always at the door." He locked up the good things he was partaking of, and commanded a servant to give him a little bread and porridge. When his father had departed, he went himself to fetch what he had hidden away. But the moment he opened the cupboard an immense toad jumped on his face and attached itself so firmly to him that it was impossible to tear it away, and the unhappy man died raging mad with this terrible mark of God's anger still clinging to him.

It is told how a young man in a fit of ferocious anger dragged his aged father by the heels from the family home to a certain spot near the rural well, when the old man cried out faintly: "Hold, my son, when I was a young man I dragged my father by the heels to this spot. It is sufficient. The just God is looking on."

In the Old Law the penalty of death was inflicted,

and that by the command of God Himself, on children who were wanting in respect for their parents. And even among the most barbarous nations this crime was always punished very severely. On the contrary, how many blessings were conferred on children wise and well-reared who paid respect to their father and mother as they were bound to? And with what complaisance were they not regarded? Let me give you two very touching examples. The first is of King Solomon. His mother having come into the council chamber where he was, to ask a favor, he came down from his throne when he saw her enter. He saluted her profoundly, and he prepared for her a throne beside his own where he had her seated.

The second example is of Pope Blessed Benedict XI. Come from a low position in society, he was raised by reason of his great merits to the chair of St. Peter. After his elevation to the Pontifical throne, his mother, who was a poor peasant, set out to see her son become Vicar of Jesus Christ. She was dressed up as a princess, and thus adorned she was presented to the Sovereign Pontiff. This great man, truly humble, would not acknowledge her in the magnificent clothes in which she was dressed, and said that his mother was only a poor country woman. She was obliged to retire in confusion. She put on her ordinary dress, and presented herself a second time. Then the Pope descended from his throne, came before her, and embraced her tenderly, and addressed her in these words: "Yes, I recognize you now for my dear and honored mother", and he treated her from that hour with the greatest respect and tenderness. These examples are touching, my dear brethren. But what are they to that one

which is above them all? It is of a God made Man who humbled himself even to obey a very poor woman, and a very humble craftsman. "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them." Love and honor your parents, my dear children, if not for all those reasons that I have given you, at least, after the example of Him who has been constituted the Model to us all. If you fulfill those duties towards them, it may be said of you what was said of this Model of all children: You will grow not only in age but also "in wisdom and grace with God and men."

SECOND SERMON — THE DUTIES OF CHILDREN

I.

Obedience

The third duty of children towards their parents is obedience. This obedience is of indispensible obligation, especially in all that has regard to the good order of the family, and the regulation of morals. This is so true that every time children fail in these respects in a considerable matter and with full deliberation, it is indubitable that they are guilty of a mortal sin. But how badly observed is this precept so strict, so compelling? How many rebellious children who live in a continual habit of disobedience, who simply do as they please? They are evidently unworthy of absolution and the Eucharist, and they cease not to approach the Divine Mysteries with a diabolical effrontery, charging themselves

thereby with as many sacrileges as they make confessions and communions.

This obedience of which we speak ought to have many qualities. It must be prompt, and a child should not differ to obey without reason, and with the necessity of being told the same thing many times. It should be cordial. One should obey with joy, and not with murmuring and grumbling. It should be universal. A child must obey in all that is just and reasonable. It should be at the same time prudent. Should it happen, which God forbid, that a father or mother command evil things, the child must say to them that we are obliged to have regard to the law of God, and that we must obey God rather than men. Meanwhile, when there is place for doubt as to whether the thing commanded is bad, or whether it may perhaps be permitted, a child ought not easily judge the conduct of his parents, but he ought to consult his pastor or confessor.

As regards a vocation to a state of life, children ought to defer as much as possible to the will of their parents, but always on condition that it is not opposed to that of God, who alone has the right to call to a state and to a profession.

II.

Service

The last duty of children towards their parents is service, which they are obliged to render them. That service ought to extend to their body and to their soul. To their body: that is to say, they are obliged to nourish and support them according to their condition, if they have not the means to provide for

themselves: to procure for them necessary remedies and all their other wants in health and in sickness, as far as their faculties will permit.

As regards their soul, they ought to pray for them: to contribute to their salvation with all their power: to see that they receive the sacraments at the hour of death; and after their decease, to execute faithfully their last wills.

How many children render themselves guilty through the neglect of a duty so just and natural? Some abandon their parents when they no longer have need of them. Others still more cruel take away from them by violence, by surprise or by stratagem, the fruits of their labors, and reduce them to poverty. Many are not ashamed to see them beg when they have it in their power to nourish them. Others do not carry out their testamentary dispositions; do not make the restitutions with which they are charged; do not acquit themselves of the Masses which were ordered them, pay not the pious legacies, and the foundations, and the alms, they have specified and commanded; and thereby they draw upon themselves the curse of Heaven. Impious, ungrateful, cruel, denatured children, I wish here to have your monstrous ingratitude put to shame by the example of a pagan woman towards her father who had been condemned to die of hunger in prison. It is a singular and admirable event, as told by the classical authors. This woman seeing her father reduced to so frightful an extremity without knowing how to succor him, bethought her of an expedient which her tenderness suggested to her. She was a nursing mother and she demanded of the jailer permission to visit her parent once a day. He permitted her on condition that she be searched each time in order

to be certain that she bring nothing in the way of nourishment to him. A considerable time passed and the prisoner very far from dying, appeared to enjoy perfect health. Spies were set upon the movements of father and child, and they soon discovered that the young woman nourished her father with her own milk. The civil authorities were so affected by her conduct that they pardoned the father in consideration of the daughter, and they changed the prison into a temple, which was dedicated to the goddess of piety.

I have now, dearly beloved, detailed the respective duties to each other of parents and children. See you, one and all, that you fulfill them as an act of homage to your God and Creator. If you do, He will reward you abundantly with the rewards promised in Scripture to dutiful parents and children, which are: a long and happy life, spiritual riches and glory here; and hereafter, the sweetness, the joys, the glory, the ineffable reward of a happy eternity.

THIRD SERMON—JUSTICE

"Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God." (*Matt. XXII, 15-21*).

"Thou Shalt Not Steal"

1. In this reply to the Pharisees and Herodians our Lord gave proof of His Divine sagacity, and foiled once again His enemies in their efforts to discredit Him before the public. These wily men, after many ineffective attempts to catch Him in His words, at last proposed to Him this captious question: whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Caesar or not? If He should answer in the affirmative, then they would take opportunity to have Him denounced before the people as an enemy of their race, who claimed exemption from taxation to a Gentile people, as being of the seed of Abraham and the Chosen People of God. If, on the other hand, He should reply that it was not lawful, they would report Him to the governor, Pontius Pilate, as a seditious man and an enemy of the Roman domination.

And our Lord, knowing their malice, does not give them the direct answer they desire, but contents Himself with the general injunction: "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar; and give to God what belongs to God."

Now, this answer of our Lord, though it might seem at first sight to be but a mere evasion of a reply to an awkward question, will be found to contain the affirmation of the principle of universal justice. "Give to Caesar," that is, as the type of your neighbor, universally, "what belongs to him." In other words, "Deal justly by every man."

This leads me to address you today on the important subject of justice; and I shall treat of it as it has respect to temporal goods merely. It is a subject that in every age has need to be held before the public. For "the concupiscence of the eyes!" the inordinate craving for the possession of temporal goods, is one of the great disorders that reign in the world. But in our times especially, thanks to the extravagant and luxurious habits of life which many lead, and to the general waning of morality consequent upon the weakening of faith, it is a subject that demands to be "preached from the housetops," and to be ever dinned into the ears of the faithful.

2. Now, justice may be looked on either as a law, or as a virtue. As a virtue, it urges us continually to give everyone his own. Its province then in this respect is to urge the restitution of things unjustly possessed; the repair of wrongs; the abstinence from fraud; fidelity in contracts; and, in general, the preservation of equity among all men.

As a law it is the correlative of right, and forbids us three things in regard to the goods of our neighbor: first, it forbids us to take unjustly what belongs to another; and this is intimated to us in the seventh Commandment: "Thou shalt not steal." Again, it forbids us to desire unjustly what belongs to another; as we are enjoined in the ninth Commandment, "Thou shalt not covet;" and, lastly, it forbids us to keep unjustly what belongs to another: "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar."

This law is founded on the natural independence of each one as regards his physical being, and on the rights that that natural independence implies.

For, you must know, dearly beloved, that though we are all socially interdependent on one another; though there is an intercommunication of goods and services amongst all states and all ranks of society; yet, each one is created physically independent of his fellows; that is to say, he looks to God alone for the preservation of his being, and the rights consequent on that being. Therefore, no one can lawfully disturb him in the peaceable possession of those things that are his, whether they come to him by inheritance, or through his own industry, or otherwise.

Moreover, God from the beginning gave a positive sanction to the ownership of temporal goods. For, we are told in the book of Genesis that He said to our first parents, who, in this respect, as in others, represented the human race, "Have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth." Now, God could not have given the ownership of temporal goods to man without, at the same time, making that ownership inviolable. He, then, that invades the rights of another by unjustly depriving him of those things that are his, commits a wrong at one and the same time against him whose rights he so invades, and against God by whose will he possesses them, and who has made Himself the surety of His subject's rights.

Hence, the Commandment: "Thou shalt not steal" —a Commandment which has a very wide signification and forbids all external acts of injustice.

"Thou Shalt Not Covet"

But the law of justice goes further still, and regulates the motions of the human heart, by for-

bidding us even to desire unjustly what belongs to another.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods; neither shalt thou desire his wife, nor is house, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his."

Our desires are to be reckoned good or bad according to the character of the things desired. If these are good and praiseworthy; worthy of praise and merit also will be the desires that stretch out to them.

But if, on the contrary, the objects of our desires be evil; evil also will be the desires themselves; according to the two-fold principle laid down by our Lord: "If thy eye," that is, of they desire, "be single; thy whole body will be lightsome; but if thy eye," also of thy desire, "be evil, thy whole body will be darksome." And is it not according to common sense that if God forbids us to do evil, that man cannot be innocent who desires to do the evil thing forbidden?

But, God seeing that there is a craving in our hearts for the possession of earthly goods, and that this craving is apt to develop into unjust desires, takes care to promulgate the Commandment: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods, neither shalt thou desire his wife, nor his house, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his."

When we look around us in the world today and see how men carry on business transactions with one another, what is the conviction that is brought home to us as to their observance of this law of justice? Thanks be to God, the great body of men

and women, and this I say of persons belonging to every state of life, strive to act honorably and justly by one another. But are there not many exceptions? Do we not meet with cases and they are not a few, where a merchant, for instance, will impose on his customers by false weights, and adulterated goods; or where they in turn refuse to pay him his lawful bills? A master overtaxes his servants, or deprives them of their lawful wages; or they in turn steal his goods; or injure his property; or neglect their tasks.

What shall I say of the frauds that are committed in buying and selling; on the exchange; in racing and gambling, etc.?

O brethren, it is not in the woods and highways that we have robbers nowadays; but thievery enters into every business; so that we seem to arrive again at the degenerate days referred to by the prophet (Osee), when "theft hath flooded the earth as a deluge."

Look into your own hearts, my brethren, and see whether they will bear the scrutiny of Divine justice. Examine whether in your past dealings with others there were not acts of injustice for which you can only expect condemnation from the Sovereign Judge. Have these injustices been repaired? Have you made amends for past wrongs? Do you at this moment possess goods that are not your own? and if so, oh, let me remind you that the law of justice involves a third prohibition not less obliging than the other two—"Thou shalt not keep unjustly what belongs to another."

III

"Give Caesar What Belongs to Caesar"

4. This law of restitution, though apparently and in its terms a positive one, is in reality a prohibitive one. Now, there is this important difference between a positive Commandment and a prohibitive one: that, whereas, the positive Commandment, though it obliges always, yet it does not demand the fulfillment of its behests at all times; the prohibitive one, on the contrary, not only obliges always, but moreover demands its observance at all times. Perhaps I will explain this clearer by a little illustration. It is said: "Keep holy the Sabbath day." "Honor thy father and thy mother." "Thou shalt hear Mass on Sundays and holidays." "Thou shalt fast on the days commanded." These four Commandments oblige always; but we are not expected to be engaged in fulfilling them at all times. We are not expected to be at all times engaged in keeping the Sunday. A child is not required to pass his life in making acts of respect towards his parents. We are not required to fast or hear Mass every instant of our lives; but only on certain specified days.

But it is different with prohibitive Commandments. "Thou shalt not kill." "Thou shalt not commit adultery." "Thou shalt not steal." "Thou shalt not covet." These not only oblige always but they demand observance at all times. We must then abstain at all times and in every conjuncture from murder, and theft, and adultery, and unlawful desires of every kind. Such is the Commandment of restitution. Though affirmative in its form; "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar," it is in reality a prohibitive Commandment, and may be formulated

in this way: "Thou shalt not keep unjustly what belongs to another." The law of restitution then obliges not only always, but at all times.

Hence it follows that there is a difference between injustice and other classes of sin; that, whereas, the latter though their guilt remains on the soul till it is forgiven by repentance, the act itself of sin is transitory; in injustice, on the contrary, not only the guilt, but the act of sin continues so long as the will cleaves to the possession of the goods unjustly taken; or, so long as restitution is refused for injury done. Every time, therefore, that the mind reverts to the obligation to make restitution, and that the will formally denies consent, a new sin of injustice is committed: so that the unjust possessor may be looked on as guilty of continual thievery and every day adds deeper and deeper guilt to his original transgression.

Moreover, there is no sin more difficult to rise out of than injustice. For, goods unlawfully possessed cleave to the soul like an inseparable attribute. So long, then, as the will refuses to make restitution, so long is repentance impossible; and as there is no remission of sin without repentance, the unjust possessor lives and dies the enemy of God.

5. O dearly beloved, these truths are very terrible, and the thought of them should fill us with fear. Let me appeal to you to pay your lawful debts; to restore ill-gotten goods; to repair the wrongs you have inflicted on others; and set things to rights with your neighbor before death comes to usher you before the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge; for then there can be no remission. No, if you were to pass your life in doing good; if you were to prac-

tise all the other virtues to perfection; if you were to perform austerities as great as those of St. Paul and St. Anthony in the desert; and if you do not justly by your fellow men, you are nothing in God's sight, and you are as certain to go to hell as if you were already there; for the Holy Spirit has declared by the mouth of the apostle: "The unjust shall never enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

Let the fruit of my discourse then be, that you resolve to act justly before God and man. Take unjustly no man's goods. Covet not the fruit of any man's labors. Restore to everyone his own. "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar:" that thus you may be able to fulfill effectually the second member of the precept: "Give to God what belongs to God."

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—THE END OF MAN

"And I spoke with my tongue, and I said: O Lord, make known to me my end and what is the number of my days, that I may know what is wanting to me."—Ps. XXXVIII, 5.

The Noblest in God's Power to Ordain Us For

1. In these words the holy King David besought the Lord for the grace to have a right apprehension of the purpose for which he had received his being, and all other gifts from God.

'Twas not that he was ignorant of God's designs upon him: he knew right well by faith that God made him for Himself alone. But living as he was in the midst of the activity and dissipation of a court, this wise and holy king feared that his heart might go astray and be wholly taken up with worldly cares and pleasures. He therefore lifted his soul in prayer to God and besought of Him to keep before him continually and efficaciously the eternal end laid out for him at his creation, to the attaining of which all his thoughts and all his efforts should be directed.

Dearly beloved, we also have need at times to consider profoundly and to bring home to ourselves the end of our being. For, although we may not be reared amid the seductions of a court, nor have the cares of an empire to occupy us: yet, how many distracting cares and occupations to take up our thoughts and engross our solicitudes day by day? How many vexations and annoyances to harry our minds and drag us down to mean and selfish ways

and aspirations? How many passions and temptations to solicit the worship of our heart and to try to usurp that sanctuary of our affections which was made for God alone? Oh, yes, we also have need of calling upon the Lord, and of begging Him to keep before us continually and efficaciously our end and the things that we are wanting in, so that we may aspire with greater ardor and put forth stronger efforts for its attainment.

What is that end?

I will not mock you by describing for you what you already know. For, religion taught you from your earliest childhood that we were made to know and love, and serve God here on earth, and to see and enjoy Him forever in Heaven. Let me only try to illustrate this answer of the Catechism by recalling to your minds the circumstances of our creation, and the gifts with which God originally endowed us.

When we take up the Bible and open its earliest pages its first words tell us that "in the beginning God created heaven and earth." From these opening words of Scripture our minds are carried spontaneously to the period that preceded the dawn of that creation, and in an extasy of thought we contemplate the Godhead living alone, self-existent, immense, unchangeable, perfect, standing in need of no created being to perfect His bliss.

A period arrives when this eternal God begins to act externally. He speaks, and at the voice of His omnipotent word, "the powers of heaven," the immense army of the stars get into position and begin their evolutions on the illimitable field of space. He commands the sea to be contained within its bounds,

and with a rush the waters of the great deep fly to the places destined for them and are chained within the hollows of the earth. He gives orders for the "living creatures having life," and in time earth, and air, and sea, and stream, teem with multitudinous forms of animated beings.

But now on the sixth day something so great, so important, is to take place that the Almighty seems to pause in the work of creation; the Blessed Trinity, to deliberate. And as the result of that august counsel of the Trinity, the Almighty decrees to make man, and to make him to His own image and likeness. "Let us make man, and let us make him to our own image and likeness."

Who and what is this man who is to crown the works of God, and for whom all the beings that were yet made were but a preparation? Who is this being who is to bear upon him the impress of God's own likeness, and who is to be the image and representative of God on earth? We are that being, dearly beloved. Yes, the infinite mind of God contemplated each one of us. He contemplated you, and He contemplated me when He said: "Let us make man." It is in that divine decree that is to be found the cause of our existence. "He made us and not we ourselves."

2. And now as we contemplate our being as it comes forth from the hand of God: how many perfections do we not find lavished upon it! How many gifts of body and soul!

But laying aside the consideration of all other endowments, are we not particularly struck with the consciousness of the possession of two transcendent faculties, the faculties of mind and free will?

I see that by this mind we are capable of knowing all earthly things, of grasping all natural sciences; I see that by it we are capable of rising beyond the sphere of merely natural things and penetrating into the regions of faith; of soaring on the wings of contemplation; of sweeping on through worlds of revelation till at last we repose at the foot of the throne of God Himself.

I find again that this will of ours is not circumscribed to the love of merely earthly things. Nay, all earthly objects together, the riches of every clime, the highest honors, the most entrancing pleasures cannot satisfy its craving. The possession of the infinite God alone can fill the vast capacity of its affective power.

Coming thus from God, thus gifted by Him, still subject to Him by the most absolute dependancy, the question arises: What could be the end for which God created us? Has He sent us into this world to do as we please? Has He given us permission to employ those heaven-born faculties of mind and will as every impulse may dictate, thus making His image, what we are, the votaries of whatever idol passion may set up on the altar of our souls?

No, this cannot be; for God is infinitely wise. He must therefore have an end and an infinitely wise one in view in making us. What is that end? What is the purpose that actuated the mind of God when He said: let us make man to our own image and likeness!

He has declared it in the first of His Commandments: "Thou shalt adore the Lord, thy God; Him only shalt thou serve;" a Commandment which brings us back again to the words of our Catechism.

"We were made to know, and love, and serve God here on earth, and to see and enjoy Him forever in the life to come."

3. And, oh, how good of God, dearly beloved, to ordain us for such an end! No, the Almighty Himself all powerful, all wise, all loving though He be, could not devise or ordain for us a nobler end. For, there is no being so great as God; and we were made to know, to love, to serve—what do I say?—we were made to see God face to face, to enjoy Him forever in the Kingdom of His glory; to possess God in the highest manner that it is possible for a finite and created being to possess Him; to see His essence; to love Him with the whole capacity of our being; to be absorbed and lost in the ocean of His love; and to be loved by Him in return with all the astonishing ardor of the Godhead. After this, let those tumultuous passions that would draw us to their service be put to silence! Let them be gone! Let all earthly ends with us be subservient to the one end for which alone we were made—to love and serve God; to fulfill His holy will here on earth, so that we may merit to enjoy Him forever in the life to come.

SECOND SERMON—THE END OF MAN

To be Attained by the Keeping of the Commandments

1. In my former discourse I recalled to your mind the great fact of our creation by Almighty God, the wondrous faculties,especially those of the mind and will, with which He endowed us in that creation, and the end He had in view when He made us and lavished on us those rich endowments;namely, the possession of Himself in the next life for all eternity.

In this I want to direct your attention in a particular manner to a thing which of course you all know, but which may not, perhaps, have made the impression on you that it might; and that is, that the Almighty has made the enjoyment of Him hereafter contingent on our faithful love and service of Him here. Of course God could if he wished have raised us at our creation to the glory of the blessed; but it was not His will to do so. On the contrary, He made beatitude the prize of virtue; or, as the Apostle has it: He made it a "crown of justice," that is to say, a crown due in justice to us for labor in His service. We are then to attain our end as a reward of virtue. 'Twill be our own and none other's. A fool may sit on a throne bequeathed him by an illustrious ancestry. It will not be so with us. We must each of us win our crown. To this effect He requires of us a faithful fulfillment of the divine law which He has given us. This fulfillment of the divine law; this service of the Lord which is to be rewarded hereafter with a crown of glory—what is it? It is the observance of the Commandments —of the Commandments, which are nothing else

than the sum of our duties to God, and to our neighbor, and to ourselves. This He tells us in every page of Scripture. "If thou wilt attain thy eternal end," He says to the young man in the Gospel, "keep the Commandments." "Keep faithfully," says the Lord to us by Moses, "Keep faithfully the Commandments which the Lord, your God, has given you; and let them be graven on your heart; and you shall tell them to your children; and you shall meditate upon them, sitting in your house, and walking on your journey, at night, in the intervals of sleep, and in the morning on your waking." In a word, "You shall have them continually before your eyes." "Keep the Commandments which the Lord, your God has given you." On this condition, and on this alone, shall you attain eternal life. Meditate upon them, sleeping, and waking, at home in your houses, and at your labor in the fields. "Have them continually before your eyes."

2. Now, before I leave this point I will put a little question to each one of you, and I will leave you the next few days to meditate upon it in the closet of your heart; and if you cannot solve it satisfactorily, it will be the business of your whole life, hereafter, to make up for your deficiency.

Now, the question for each one of you to put to yourself is this: "As I look back on my past career since the time I came to the use of reason, can I lay my hand on my heart and say that, to the best of my abilities I have kept the Commandments?" "Have I loved, served, and worshipped God alone?" "Have I paid due reverence to His Holy Name? Have I sanctified the Lord's day by attending devoutly at Mass and by abstaining from servile

works? Have I been an obedient, dutiful son or daughter, and at all times given due honor to my parents? Have I kept my soul chaste and refrained from all manner of evil thoughts, and words, and works? Have I kept each and all of the other Commandments of the Lord?"

Enough, O God of Knowledge! Thou overwhelmest us with the most superficial scrutiny, of our lives. And, O God, as we cast a glance upon that black and dreary past, what a hideous portent rises to our memories? Is there, O Lord, a single Commandment that we have kept—a single precept that we have not many times transgressed? Is there a single virtue that we can say in truth, we practised? —a single faculty of body or soul that we have not profaned and subjected to the service of the devil?

Alas, dear Lord, we must confess that we began to be sinners from our earliest youth. Every power of body and soul has been perverted—mind, and will, and memory, and imagination; eyes, and ears, and tongue, and lips, and hands, and feet, and our whole persons have been desecrated by sin.

3. And, as we scan that dark and wicked past, can we, oh, can we plead in excuse our weakness, our temptations, or the difficulties of fulfilling the holy code of the Commandments? Alas, we stand self-condemned. For, did not God prevent us with a thousand lights and graces? And when we were yet infants, did He not put the seal of His election on us in calling us to the Catholic Faith? Did He not give us Catholic parents to form us in virtue? When we grew up did He not give us good and zealous pastors to impart to us His holy truths? Did He not strengthen us with His Sacraments—penance

to raise us up when we were fallen, and the Blessed Eucharist, His own most precious Body and Blood, to be the food of our souls? And yet, in spite of all this, we fell, and fell miserably.

4. But, after all, we shall not be confounded. No, for we have an "Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ, the Just." He, our loving Redeemer, will make intercession for us, and will even now, if we be truly contrite, obtain for us remission for the past, and hope for the future. Thanks to His powerful intercession, He it was who procured for us this mission which we now begin to understand the meaning of. It is a time of amnesty, of pardon, for contrite souls. And no matter how bad and sinful may have been the past, He now invites us to return to Him in the sincerity of our hearts. Enter then with zeal on the holy exercises of this mission. If possible, don't miss a single sermon. Who knows in which of them the grace of your conversion and sanctification may not be obtained? Prepare to make a good Confession a worthy Communion. Lay the solid foundation of a better future by a true contrition for your sins. Make good resolutions for the government of your lives hereafter. Lay aside your leaning for the false honors, the perishable riches, the base pleasures of the present life. Aspire after the true goods of life eternal, your true end. Thus will you obtain a true and lasting happiness here, and the hope of a blessed eternity, hereafter.

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FIRST SERMON—THE ETERNITY OF HELL

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus who lay at his gate full of sores, desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did give him; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.

"And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.

"And the rich man also died, and he was buried in hell. And lifting up his eyes when he was in torments he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; and he cried, and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'

"And Abraham said to him: 'Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is fixed a great chaos; so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot, nor from thence come hither.'

"And he said: 'Then, father, I beseech thee that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; for, I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torments.'

"And Abraham said unto him: 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' But he said: 'No, father Abraham, but if one went to them from the dead they will do penance.' And he said to him:

'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead'."—Luke xvi. 19-31.

I.

The "Darkness that Covers the Face of the Abyss"

1. In this parable of the rich glutton our blessed Lord, by one of those bold and rapid sketches so frequently to be met with in holy scripture, puts before us at a glance the alternative fate that awaits us all in the next world; either an eternity of happiness with God, symbolized in the happy state of Lazarus lying in Abraham's bosom, or an eternity of woe, typified in the sad lot of the rich glutton buried in hell. At the same time He lays before us the conditions that make for the attainment of the one or the other of those states hereafter—of the former, suffering, poverty, hunger, contempt, relieved a little perhaps at times by the crumbs of comfort that come even indirectly from the wicked; and the sympathy of God's lowly creatures symbolized by the dog that licked the poor beggar's sores, as he lay at the rich man's gate; of the latter, a lavish abundance of the good things of this world; finery in the way of clothing and dwelling; luxury in eating and drinking; honors, riches, pleasures, 'heaped up and running over;' and indulged in without regard to order or measure; and hereafter, sepulture in hell.

But it is not the salient points of this fine parable that I desire to direct your attention to today; nor yet the many practical deductions that may be drawn from it; nor the lessons of morality that it contains.

My purpose is to lay before you a truth which I know beforehand you are all convinced of, but which has been persistently denied, nevertheless, with great injury to souls; namely, the eternity of the pains of hell.

Some twenty or twenty-five years ago a great stir was created among the reading classes in this , as in other English speaking countries, by a series of articles in one of the great magazines from the pen of a distinguished Catholic writer denying the eternity of the pains of hell. The doctrine was greatly discussed at the time. It disturbed the faith of many souls, and carried others away into heretical belief; till, finally, it was condemned by the Holy See as a flagrant contradiction of the clearest teaching of scripture.

About the same time, or perhaps a little earlier, you had here in the United States, that blatant and impious atheist, Ingersol, proclaiming the same error from a hundred platforms, and denying the existence of a future state of punishment with all the brutal audacity of his vulgar and irreligious soul. There is, moreover, a pernicious sect influential only for evil. I mean the sect of the freemasons, which sets up this doctrine, amid many others equally erroneous, as one of the articles of its teachings, which it does by means of a disreputable press.

Once again, you will remember that this was one on the doctrines ventilated here in San Francisco, only a few weeks ago by that eccentric churchman, Pastor Russell, of the Brooklyn tabernacle, to the great scandal of the thousands who went to her him speak in Dreamland skating rink.

And, lastly, there is a mawkish sentiment abroad

in these days amongst the Protestant population of this country, a sentiment certainly not discouraged by many of their ministers, nay, preached from many a pulpit, to say that God is too good, too merciful, to punish creatures with everlasting torments. These people would credit the Almighty with a mercy which is to be exercised at the expense of His truthfulness and justice; and thus allow sinners to indulge with impunity and without remorse their evil and lustful passions. I shall not be out of keeping with the thoughts and with the topics of the times, therefore, if I speak to you today on this awesome and fearful truth. It is a truth which many dare not even call to their remembrance; and which no one has yet been able to contemplate without feeling a cold shiver of horror pass through him; but which, nevertheless, all the damned are obliged to bear the weight of, after they have rendered an account to the Sovereign Judge.

2. In the punishment of the damned which faith proposes to us there are some that strike our senses, and enter into our imagination. We can form to ourselves some idea of the fire, of the hunger, of the thirst, and of many other punishments; but in regard to eternity, we see absolutely nothing. It is the 'darkness,' spoken of in the sacred text, 'which covers the face of the abyss,' and which the light of the Almighty alone can penetrate the obscurity of. It is the 'chaos' which the patriarch Abraham calls 'inaccessible,' when speaking to the rich glutton. It is as a 'wall of separation' set up between the elect and the reprobate. It is that 'sea' of which the Psalmist speaks, and 'which no creature can measure the depth, or the extent of.' It is, in a word, an invincible obstacle which separates infinitely the

damned from their God, and which prevents them from touching His mercy by their cries and groans; while at the same time it closes up irrevocably the stream of graces and heavenly consolations.

3. Authors who have written on this frightful truth, not knowing by what means to convey some notion of it, have been obliged to have resource to comparisons and suppositions that are in some way within the reach of the human mind, and that are, as a consequence, as far removed from the reality, as the being of God is from that of the creature.

Some have employed the example of a circle which is without end. Others have supposed as many ages as there are drops of water in the ocean, or atoms in the air. Others, again, have used other comparisons and suppositions.

But the supposition that seems to carry the imagination farthest in this matter is that of a globe of sand, let it be a million times the size of this earth; and they would have a little bird appear every hundred thousand years and carry away in its beak a single grain of sand from the monstrous mass. Meanwhile, however immense may appear the time it would take the bird to carry away the globe of sand, this time would fall infinitely short of eternity; because between the finite and the infinite there is, and can be, absolutely no proportion.

See, my brethren, to what shifts the greatest intellects are reduced when they come to speak of eternity. There is no question here of days, years, ages, millions of ages. There is no question of space or time; no distinction of past, present, or future. Eternity has neither distinction nor division. It has no other space or measure than always and ever.

"It is," according to the famous definition of Boetius, "an entire and perfect possession all at once, of an interminable existence."

II.

No Truth More Clearly Established in Scripture

1. Now, there is no truth more clearly established in the sacred text, than the eternity of the pains of hell. It would seem that our blessed Lord, foreseeing the deceptions to be employed by the devil wherewith to beguile sinners in their evil ways, could not too often repeat this truth in the Gospel, or employ terms clear enough to leave it without the smallest particle of doubt. In the sentence which He tells us that as Sovereign Judge He will pronounce against the wicked on the last day, He brings out as clear as words can put it, the eternity of their punishments. "Depart from Me, ye accursed," He shall say, "into fire eternal." And in a single chapter of the Gospel, the ninth of St. Mark, He repeats the same truth three times over. "If thy hand scandalize thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into unquenchable fire, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished. And if thy foot scandalize thee, cut it off. It is better for thee to enter lame into life everlasting, than having two feet, to be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire." And He adds for the second time: "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished. And if thy eye is a source of sin to thee, pluck it out. It is better for thee with one eye to enter into the Kingdom of God, than having two eyes, to be cast into the hell of fire." And He adds, for the third time:

"where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished."

How touching is this, my dearly beloved. What more could our amiable Saviour do; what could He say more pressing to convince us unanswerably of the terrors which await the wicked in hell?

After the clear teaching of our blessed Lord in regard to the eternity of the torments of hell, I need not amplify the theological proofs which go to support this teaching. Let me only say that God's justice demands that sin be punished as much as it deserves, and as long as it exists, and is not destroyed. And as mortal sin is an offense of infinite malice, and as it shall exist always in the reprobate; since, moreover, being creatures they are incapable of suffering an infinite punishment in themselves, that punishment must be infinite in regard to its duration: that is to say, eternal!

III

The Most Despair-Provoking of the Evils that Afflict the Damned

2. So much for the truth of my subject. Now, of all the evils that afflict the damned in hell, there is not one so despair-provoking and intolerable as this. What a consolation is it to the poor prisoner, only to see his dungeon opened from time to time; or to the exile, to be able to hope for a return to his native land? What a consolation to the poor sufferer to have a hope to see an end to his suffering? The damned are enchained in a frightful prison; they are exiles from their heavenly country; they are laden with all sorts of evils. Never shall there be

for them an alleviation of their miseries. Never shall there be for them an approach to the abode of eternal happiness. They shall never see their prison doors unbarred. "The angel of the Lord," according to the sacred text, "has shut the gate of the abyss" where they are buried, and he has sealed the entrance to it with the seal of the angel of the God of vengeance. In vain do they lift their hands towards the heavenly Jerusalem. In vain do they strive to approach it and to raise themselves thither. In vain do they sigh unceasingly after the Sovereign Good, There is for them no longer any hope. Eternal wretchedness is their portion. There will always be between them and the elect an impassible barrier. The wall which they have built for themselves by their iniquities will never be thrown down.

And this frightful knowledge adds infinitely to their punishment. For, eternity enters into all their torments. They suffer it, so to speak, whole and entire in each instant.

And as eternity is infinite it renders all the pains of hell infinite likewise. And thus it is true to say that the damned suffer an eternal hunger, an eternal thirst, an eternal fire; or what is the same thing, an infinite thirst, an infinite hunger, an infinite burning; and so of the other punishments which will be equally infinite; because they are eternal.

Eternity possesses them entirely. They are, as it were, swallowed up and lost in it. Their memory is filled with their eternity. Their mind is incessantly applied to it. Their will is so much the more tormented by it, as it has so great a horror for them, and as it can in no wise be separated from them. And what is most frightful, they endure in some fashion

an entire eternity each moment; and for this reason, that it enters into all their punishments, as we have already said, and that it impresses at each instant of their punishment the frightful character of a duration without end.

3. Be you not then, my dearly beloved, carried away by false teachers and by the delusion of the times; rather let us all weep over our past sins and cry out to God, and say: "O Lord, deliver us from eternal death! Deliver us from Your anger justly enkindled against us! Turn not away from us Your adorable face. Deprive us not forever of Your loving presence. You created us for Your glory, and You prepared the abyss of Your vengeance only for the apostate angels. Permit not then that we occupy in that sad abode the place due to our infidelities. Chastise us rather in this life. Here burn; here cut; here spare not. Let us bear the just punishment of our offences, by sickness, by poverty, by hunger, by all the other means that are most pleasing to Your Providence. But we implore You, through the mercy of Jesus Christ, through the saving efficacy of that salutary Name, and the prayers of His Holy Mother, spare us for eternity."

SECOND SERMON—CONFIRMATION

I

"A Great Sacrament"

It becomes my duty to address you this morning on the second of the Sacraments, namely, Confirmation.

Now, in reference to this Sacrament, a curious question was put long ago by the bishops of Spain to Pope St. Melchiades. They asked to be informed by him which was the greater, the Sacrament of Baptism, or that of Confirmation; and to their inquiries the Pope replied: "You ask, Venerable Brethren, to be informed by us which is the greater Sacrament, the Imposition of the hands of the bishop, or Baptism. Know," he says, "and hold this for certain; that the one and the other is a great Sacrament."

Confirmation is allotted the second place among the Sacraments, not by reason of the time when it was instituted; for it was among the last in this respect; nor yet by reason of the order in which it is generally received by children in our day. For Penance, and the Eucharist are frequently received earlier in life than it is; but because it is looked on as the complement of Baptism; and as such it was in former times conferred immediately after the reception of that first Sacrament.

It might be asked, since the gifts of the Holy Ghost are received in Baptism, together with sanctifying grace and the infused virtues; what necessity is there for this special Sacrament of Confirmation?

We shall be better able to understand this if we

consider the analogy which the Sacraments have with the means given us for the perfection of our physical and social well-being. Let me explain this. As, dear brethren, there is an analogy, a likeness, between the life of the soul and that of the body; between our spiritual and eternal well-being, and that which pertains to us physically and socially: so, there is an analogy between the means given us by God for the attainment of the perfection of the spiritual life, and those that are necessary for our temporal well-being. Now, as in order to arrive at the fullness of our corporal life, we have need not only of being born, but also of growing to the perfection of manhood or womanhood: so, also, in order that we may arrive at the fulness of the spiritual life, and that we become perfect Christians, we have need of not only being born spiritually by Baptism, but also of being strengthened, and of growing to the fulness of the spiritual life, which we do by the graces received in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Hence, Pope St. Melchiades in his reply to the Spanish bishops, said: "The Holy Ghost who comes down upon the waters of Baptism on a healing mission, in the blessed font, confers a full remission of sins: the Same in confirmation gives an increase to the graces received in Baptism. In Baptism we are born again to the spiritual life: after Baptism we are strengthened for the spiritual fight. In Baptism we are cleansed: after Baptism we are made strong." Hence, the necessity of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

II

It Confers on Us the Plenitude of Spiritual Power

In this analogy, dearly beloved, there is pointed out to us one of the special effects of Confirmation: and that is, to confer on us the plenitude of spiritual power that we may be enabled to fight the battle of life, and resist successfully the onslaught of the enemies of our souls. This effect is made evident in a very striking manner to anyone who studies the history of the Apostles as furnished by the Gospel.

Those men were early in our Lord's public career received as children of the Church. The waters of Baptism which they were privileged to confer on others were doubtless poured upon themselves. They were admitted to a special familiarity and companionship with out Lord. They shared His labors; were the objects of His tender solicitude; were admitted to long and special conferences with Him. With what divine solicitude did He not provide for their spiritual welfare? He Himself taught them by word and example during the three years of their relations with Him.

And yet, with what results? After all the solicitude of the Saviour; after all His care and tenderness they showed themselves but as children in virtue. They had all the faults that children usually discover in their exhibitions of character. They were vain, and even at the moment of our Lord's Passion, though the Master had warned them that a catastrophe was at hand, they occupied themselves solely with disputing among themselves as to who should be superior when the Master should be removed

from them. They were foolish and slow of heart to believe even the plainest truths of our religion. Their worldly minds could not understand after all His lessons the mystery of their vocation, or the message of Jesus Christ to men.

Even on the night of His Passion: nay, again at the moment of the Ascension: they inquire if He were not about to inaugurate the glorious temporal kingdom foolishly expected by the Jews. When the storm burst on the Saviour the most trusted are found indulging in shameful slumber. In the hour of trial one is found a traitor; another, the most zealous, grows pale at the accusation of a servant maid, and declares with an oath that he does not know his Master. All timidly abandon Him and save themselves by flight. Even after the trial is over, and after they have the full assurance of the Resurrection, they are timid, and hide themselves in a closed and barred chamber, for fear of the Jews.

But has the great day of Pentecost arrived? Has the grace of the Holy Ghost been poured upon them? Have they received the effects of the Sacrament of Confirmation? They are as men animated with a new spirit. They are no longer children. They are as men arrived at the plenitude of the spiritual life and power. They are as men made drunk with the strong wine of grace which energizes in their souls and carries them to acts of unheard of heroism and zeal. From that hour the feebleness and pusilanimity of childhood has passed away. Their minds are filled with a new light. They are as warriors that go forth to subdue the world to the faith of Jesus Christ. Neither scourges, nor prison-cells, nor the opposition of the powers of the world, nor hell itself, can stop the onslaught of their ardent

zeal. Continents are too small for the exercise of their apostolic ardor. Communities and nations will be welded into one grand Christian society by the power of that grace which stirs in the hearts of the apostles, and makes them heroes in the name of Christ. "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia; Pontus, and Asia; Phrygia, and Pamphylia; Egypt and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene; and strangers of Rome; Jews, also, and proselytes; Cretes, and Arabians; the men of all nations will hear a doctrine that was never heard before; and the twelve fishermen of Galilee will tell in all languages the wonderful works of God."

Such were the effects of the grace of Confirmation in the hearts of the apostles; and such they are still, though in a less marked way, or rather with less exterior effect, in the hearts of those who receive this Sacrament worthily and with due preparation. It confers on us the plenitude of the gifts of the Holy Ghost by which we are endowed with new instincts to discover and apprehend spiritual and eternal things, and are enabled to achieve victories over our spiritual enemies, and our passions, no less signal than those the apostles gained long ago over the opposition of the world.

Oh, dearly beloved, let us show our gratitude to God for the institution of this great Sacrament, so advantageous to us, and so necessary, especially in our days, when we are exposed to so many dangers of the loss of our souls. Let us appreciate its benefits, and strive earnestly during our whole lives to profit by its sevenfold gifts, so necessary for our spiritual well-being here, and for the attainment of a glorious eternity hereafter.

THIRD SERMON—CONFIRMATION

I

Confers the Fulness of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost

With your forbearance I come to treat further of the subject that engaged out attention at first Mass. And in doing so let me first of all remark briefly a thing you may have noticed, but which you may not all have got the key to the explanation of. It is this. In your daily intercourse with those who do not belong to our religion you may have noticed in them a strange incapacity to comprehend the plainest truths of our holy faith—things that appeal to you with a clearness approaching the evidence of reason. You may have further remaked in them a strange inability to apply themselves to things that belong to the spirit—a want of the supernatural instinct which leaves them disposed solely for the study and appreciation of things that belong to this world.

Now this dullness of mind in regard to spiritual things, so manifest in those who are not of our faith; this slowness of heart to penetrate supernatural truths, will not appear unaccountable to you if you consider that God has endowed you with the spirit of discernment—a light totally superior to the natural power of the mind, and has implanted in your will an instinct for the appreciation of supernatural goods, which your less-favored Protestant neighbor has not, and the absence of which makes him incapable of understanding and appreciating the things which this light and this instinct make to you not only possible but easy and agreeable. Whence comes this grace?

It comes, primarily, from the theological virtues infused into your soul by Baptism, a Sacrament which your Protestant neighbor, maybe, has not received validly at all, and which have been developed in you by a Catholic education, and the reception of the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist; but it comes especially and in a most marked way from the fulness of the gifts of the Holy Ghost conferred on you in Confirmation. The powers of your soul have been immeasurably aided and illuminated by the reception of these gifts. Your mind has been illuminated by the four intellectual gifts of wisdom, and understanding, and counsel, and knowledge. Your will has been strengthened and perfected by fortitude and piety. Your whole soul has been enriched by a reverential fear of the Lord, which keeps you ever disposed to fulfil His holy will.

And even though your Protestant neighbor may have received the gifts of the Holy Ghost in Baptism; yet, he has received them only after the manner of a child who is still weak, whose faculties are undeveloped: even as in babyhood, the members of the body, as well as the mental faculties, are undeveloped and rudimentary, and unable to exercise perfect action.

The Baptized Protestant endowed with the infused virtues is in a state such as were the apostles before the descent of the Holy Ghost; and, hence, his dullness of mind, and slowness of heart to believe. He has received but the graces of childhood; whereas, you by Confirmation are gifted with supernatural instincts, and the intelligence of one arrived at the state of mature manhood. In a word, you are enriched with the Sacramental graces proper to the Sacrament.

II

One of the "Sacraments of the Living"

There is another aspect in which it is good to look on Confirmation; viz., as a Sacrament which increases sanctifying grace in the soul. To be precise, Confirmation is one of the Sacraments that are called, "of the living." It is a Sacrament of the living; that is to say, it presupposes the supernatural life of grace already existing in the soul of those who are permitted to receive it. It is a Sacrament that confers supernatural strength. Now as in the natural order one must already live, before he can gain strength and grow to the fulness of manhood or womanhood; so, also, Confirmation, which gives spiritual strength, presupposes as a disposition, not only the spiritual birth of Baptism; but also that the soul lives the life of sanctifying grace, and that it is free from the spiritual death of mortal sin.

But even when the soul is dead; when it is in the state of mortal sin, its reception can, on occasion, even as can that of the other Sacraments of the living confer spiritual life. For, all the Sacraments confer grace, as it is said, "ex opere operato;" that is, from the very necessity of their being, and nothing can resist this effect, save an indisposed will—a will that preserves an affection for mortal sin.

I suppose, therefore, a person presents himself for Confirmation in the state of sin, but unconscious of his being in that sad state, and with the disposition of imperfect Contrition. The Confirmation is from its very nature intended to cause an increase of sanctifying grace in a soul already living. How can it cause an increase of that which does not already

exist? The irresistible efficacy of the Sacrament, and the same may be said of the Eucharist, of Extreme Unction, of Holy Orders, of Matrimony; the irresistible efficacy of the Sacrament pours its flood of life-giving and sacramental grace into the soul; even as the sunlight floods an apartment from which the shutters have been removed, warms it with a new life of sanctifying grace, and rejoices it anew with the infused virtues and the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Let me observe, however, that though Confirmation blots out mortal sin, this does not dispense from the confession of such sins afterwards. For Confession is a law imposed by Christ on all those who have sinned mortally after Baptism.

III

By It We Are Made Soldiers of Jesus Christ

There is a third consideration which I must not pass over in the exposition of this Sacrament. It is, that by Confirmation we are incorporated in that grand army whose Captain is none other than Jesus Christ. At Confirmation, when the bishop confers the Sacrament, after he has extended his hands, and called down the Holy Ghost, he takes the Holy Chrism and anoints with it the candidate for the Sacrament, as a sign of the grace of the Holy Ghost. At the same time he pronounces the formula: "I sign you with the sign of the Cross, and confirm you with the chrism of salvation; in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." What is the meaning of this mysterious word, and of this striking act of the bishop?

It signifies that by that sacred form of words the

recipient is enlisted into the ranks of the soldiers of Jesus Christ—that he has received the strength to battle bravely in defense of truth and virtue, and even to the shedding of his blood, for the confession of the faith. His body is marked with the sign of the cross, even as the soldier is clothed in the uniform of the country in whose service he enlists; and the cross upon his forehead is the efficient sign of the indellible character of the Christian soldier which is impressed upon his soul, the device of the august Leader under whose banner he purposes to serve.

In fact, dearly beloved, Confirmation is one of those Sacraments that impress a character upon the soul, and that character is of a soldier of Jesus Christ.

In Baptism, we received the character of children, and we were adopted into the family of the Godhead. We were gifted with all the privileges of the children of God, even with the privilege to apply to Him the honorable title: "Abba:" "My Father."

But in Confirmation we attain to the fulness of spiritual manhood or womanhood, and we have been endowed with the gifts of the Holy Ghost in their fulness.

What a glorious character, this, my brethren, with which we are signed in Confirmation, and what zeal should animate us in the discharge of the spiritual functions that accompany it? Like the great Apostle, we should be able to cry out in loyalty and zeal: "I know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, in whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world;" and "No, nothing shall separate us from the charity of Christ; neither tribulation, nor dis-

tress, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor danger, nor persecution, nor the sword." Nay, our whole ambition, after the grace of Confirmation ought to be to become identified with Jesus Christ, so that our lives, our persons, our whole being, should be united to Him. We should be able to say:" I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me;" and "I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angel, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Let this be the spirit that shall animate each one of us who have received the character of soldier of Jesus Christ in Confirmation; so that till death we shall show ourselves the loyal soldiers of the great Captain, who by His Cross blotted out the decree of death that was written against us, and overcame the world.

SECOND PART

ROSARY SUNDAY—THE ROSARY*

I

A Great Agency for the Sanctification of Souls

Among the devotions that have sprung up in the Church in honor of the Mother of God, perhaps none has brought her more glory, none has been more advantageous to souls than that which we offer her with such marked fervor on this great Solemnity —the devotion of the Holy Rosary.

It is with the view of furthering your zeal in the recitation of the great prayer that I adress you today.

Now, the Rosary is made up, as you are aware, of two elements, the vocal and the mental. The vocal element consists of three of the most excellent prayers that have been given us by the Church: the "Our Father;" the "Hail Mary;" and the "Glory be to the Father." The mental element consists of the meditation on the chief mysteries pertaining to our Lord's life. Let me first of all say a few words about the vocal element.

And, first, the "Our Father." This prayer, simple in its form, so as to be accommodated to the capacity of the most untutored, was taught us by our Lord Jesus Christ, and it contains in its seven petitions all that we can ask of God, whether for His own glory, or for those things that have regard to our spiritual or temporal well-being.

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*Preached in St. Malachy's Church, Dundalk, Ireland, Rosary Sunday, 1902.

Again, the "Hail Mary" is composed of the words first spoken by the angel Gabriel, when on the part of God, he announced to the Virgin the mystery of the Incarnation.

And to this there is added the "Glory be to the Father;" words of profoundest adoration of the Blessed Trinity; and analogous to the words of supreme praise offered by the blessed spirits before the throne of God in Heaven.

But not in the vocal element alone does the excellence of this devotion consist. For, behold a new thing in the history of prayer—a thing that shows its inspiration from on high. To the vocal, there is joined that more sublime and altogether spiritual form of prayer—the prayer of contemplation. So that whilst the lips move in praise of God, and the heart is bowed in adoration, the mind is engaged in holy meditation on the mysteries of religion. In this meditation we follow Jesus Christ in the joyful mysteries, and in the sorrowful, and in the glorious ones, through the chief events of His blessed life. We are brought into touch with all that is most holy and edifying in His actions, all that is most worthy of our deepest gratitude, of our warmest love, of our profoundest adoration.

This meditation on the mysteries of our Lord's life, in conjunction with the sublime prayers which form its vocal element, constitutes the Rosary a great agency for the sanctification of souls. For, there is put before us daily for meditation the Incarnation, the Birth, the Childhood, the Sufferings the Death, and glorious Life of our Lord, the example of the virtues and good works of His blessed life, all that is Divine in His character, together

with the virtues and privileges of His Holy Mother, which are contemplated in all the mysteries.

As a result, we are not surprised to find this prayer credited from the time of its institution, 700 years ago, with many beneficial results to souls—the faithful while they meditated on the humility that is shown forth in the birth and infancy of Jesus Christ, learned to be humble likewise—they were inspired to lead chaste lives from the contemplation of the spotless purity of Mary—they learned to bear persecution for justice' sake from the example of our Lord suffering persecution and sorrow during His mortal life, and at last dying abandoned on the Cross.

II

A Great Preservative of the Faith

The Rosary has had a good influence, not only on individuals, but upon whole nations. It has moulded their character; it has shaped their conduct; it has preserved their faith in times of great public trial. And, while peoples amongst whom the devotion was neglected or had declined fell into heresy and were lost to the Church, those peoples amongst whom it was practised sustained the trial, and preserved uninjured the precious heritage of faith.

How do I prove this?

When the heresy of Luther swept over the face of Europe, and scorched as with the breath of hell many a fair province of the Church, the Rosary it was that preserved strong and fresh in the hearts of those who cherished it, the heritage of faith and piety. Thus it has been said that Spain, Italy, the Ty-

rol, Hungary, and may parts of Germany and the Netherlands, all were either wholly or in great part indebted to the Rosary for their adherence to Catholicity in those days of trial. The faculty of Theology of the University of Salamanca, for instance, testified with gratitude that it was the "devotion to the Rosary that established the kingdom of Spain in the Catholic faith."

"We bear witness in truth," says the same faculty, in the University of the Sorbonne, in Paris, "that the greater part of France was purged from heresy by the Rosary."

In the districts of Vomura and Nagasachi in the midst of the pagan empire of Japan there is a peculiar festival observed. It is called "the feast of the finding of the Christians," and its celebration yearly was ordered by the late pope, Pius IX.

The circumstances of its institution are these. In the fifties of the last century Catholic missionaries who had penetrated into the interior of the Island-Empire came upon a body of Christians in these districts numbering many thousands, amongst whom a priest had not been seen for over 250 years. Their Catholicity was as strong as when their forefathers had received the faith through the preaching of the Dominicans and the other missionary priests in the latter half of the sixteenth, and the beginning of the seventeenth century. What was it that preserved their faith so miraculously throughout that long period of isolation? It was their fidelity to the recitation of the Rosary. On every seventh day the body of the faithful were accustomed to assemble, as we are told, and to recite the Rosary in common, as they had been taught to do before the

death of their martyred missionaries. And it was the divine efficacy of this prayer, and the contemplation of its mysteries, that preserved the faith pure and unspotted in the hearts of these people in the midst of the pagan influences that surrounded them.

III

The Beloved and the Glory of Ireland

But we need go no farther than our own beloved country for a conspicuous example of the efficacy of the Rosary to sustain the faith of a people.

Have we not seen the arm of religious persecution raised against our people for fully 300 years? Have we not seen powerful monarchs use all their might and ingenuity to rob them of their precious heritage? And at the end, we behold the faith of the Irish people come out of the conflict unsullied by a spot of error.

What was it that preserved the faith of our forefathers in those miserable days? It was, I claim, their adherance, perseverant and unyielding to the devotion of the Rosary.

All else was taken from them by the robber hand that ruled over them in the name of British law. Banished from their ancestral homes, they were compelled to drag out their lives in poverty and ignorance; their religion proscribed, their priests outlawed; deprived of religious instruction, deprived of all the external rites of religious worship, one thing alone remained to them, and that was their beads which they carried on their person, the prayer of which they had learned to lisp at their mother's

knee and which they now found to be their constant stay and reminder of their duties to God and religion.

It was this prayer—the prayer that as a tradition was recited every evening in the bosom of the Catholic family, or that was murmured by the weary outlaw on the lonely bog or the bleak mountain side that saved the faith of our sainted forefathers. I speak only of that which history testifies. And many a martyr, as eyewitnesses relate, was seen kissing the cross of his rosary beads as he mounted the scaffold on which he was to give his life for the faith of Jesus Christ.

And, as I cast a glance into the gloom of those unhappy times, a vision radiant rises up before men which fills my soul with pride.

Methinks I see once more the princes and chieftans of Erin assembled in a southern city—to take council for the preservation of faith and fatherland. I see the future president of that national assembly, the chivalrous and prudent Renuccini, the envoy from far off Rome, bless the banner of the confederate Irish army, and entrust it to their leader amid the cheers of an enthusiastic nation. I follow northward in the wake of that gallant army and behold it encamped on the slopes of Benburb. I watch the fortunes of that bloody day; and before the sun dips his penons in the wesetrn horizon, I behold the enemies of our holy faith fly before the headlong charge of Irish valor like stags at the sound of the huntsman's horn. And as victory lights up the plain I am tempted to enquire what flag is that under which is banded the manhood of holy Ireland, and what is the device it bears upon its silken folds? Lovers of Mary rejoice! The flag that leads the Irish hosts to victory on

the day on which they girded themselves in the cause of faith and nationality is that of your own glorious Queen, the banner of the Holy Rosary.*

Our success was brief. We were beaten! It was not so much that we were worsted on the battle-field, as that our cause was lost through the treachery of false-hearted friends, and the half-heartedness and jealousy of men who preferred their broad lands and the favor of a worthless monarch to the cause of faith and fatherland. But the fact remains, to be handed down to all time, and it is an indication of the source whence came their martyr spirit, that when the Irish people took up arms in the cause of religion and nationality, she under whose auspices they fought, whose protection they invoked, and which protection has been wonderfully extended to them and to their children, was none other than your own beloved queen, the Queen of the Most Holy Rosary.

This, then, is the devotion I come to preach to you today—a devotion made venerable by the tradition of 700 years, a devotion given to the Church by the Queen of Heaven herself, and made forever glorious by the working of the most astounding miracles, a devotion that has preserved the faith in

*This venerable relic of Irish faith and valor "The flag of the Confederation" (of Kilkenny) as it is called, is to be seen today hanging in the cloister of the great Dominican monastery, Tallaght, Country Dublin. Though century stained and war-torn, the beautiful design of the Queen of the Holy Rosary, seated and crowned, and surmounted with the chaplet of the Rosary, is as fresh and beautiful as it was when it left the hand of the artist, now nearly 300 years ago.

every country whose inhabitants were zealous in its practice, a devotion that daily introduces us to the very sanctuary of religious truth, and that makes us participators in the counsels of God, a devotion blessed by all the Sovereign Pontiffs who have reigned since its inception, and enriched with the most copious indulgences; above all, a devotion entwined in the history of our race during the prolonged struggle for the faith where the green sward of Ireland was dyed from end to end with the blood of martyrs who gave their lives for the Name of Jesus Christ.

Continue, then as in the past, your love for this great and renowned devotion. Cherish it as the dearest heritage of your race. Transmit it as an heirloom to your children. Let it be spread abroad as the sunshine, till there be not a family from mountain to the sea where the Rosary will not be nightly recited. Carry your chaplet on your person. Accustom yourselves to recite it daily throughout your life; and at death, let your failing tongue lisp its "Hail Marys," your dying lips kiss its hallowed wood.

Thus, she whom you shall have honored throughout life, whom you shall have invoked so often to be present at your death, will not fail you at that supreme hour. She will come to succor you with her powerful protection, and to take you to the assembly of Her clients, that blessed company which of old she visioned to the founder of the devotion, when raising her mantle, she showed him the children of the Rosary, innumerable as the stars, and happy in the possession of eternal glory.

THE ROSARY*

I

The Salvation of Christendom

It was an occasion of great joy to all the inhabitants of Judea when Judith cut off the head of Holofernes, the general of the Assyrian army, and sent his army fleeing among the hills. And the event was celebrated with songs of jubilee and thanksgiving by all the people. And Eliachim, the high priest, came up from Jerusalem to Bettulia with all the ancients to take part in the festivities, and he with them praised the heroine, saying: "Thou are the glory of Jerusalem; thou art the joy of Israel; thou art the honor of thy people. Thou hast done manfully and thy heart hath been strengthened, because thou hast loved chastity, . . . and, therefore, thou shalt be blessed forever."

Somewhat of the joy and triumph that stirred in the breasts of the Bettulians on their deliverance at the hands of this incomparable woman is awakened in the church today when we commemorate the deliverance of Christendom from the hateful tyranny of the Turk by the ever-glorious Virgin Mary.

It too was a great and momentous occasion. The barbarous hordes of Soliman, the Moslem emperor, had already laid waste the whole eastern world, had profaned the holy places of Judea, and were now preparing for the conquest of Europe, which they threatened to deluge in Christian blood; when they

*Preached in Holy Rosary Church, Portland, Oregon, on the occasion of the Solemn Procession of Rosary Sunday, 1912.

were overthrown and their power forever put in check at the hands of a woman greater than Judith, and at the prayers of her children, the members of the Rosary confraternities of Italy, at the head of whom we recognize, walking barefooted and in tears, the venerable Pontiff, Pope Pius V, the worthy son of Dominic of the Rosary.

Shall we not then on this solemn day of commemoration of the monumental victory of Lepanto, salute our mother, the Queen of the Holy Rosary, in words of praise reminiscent of those of Eliachim and the ancients: "Thou art the glory of the heavenly Jerusalem, by the perfection of thy being flowing with graces and benedictions. Thou are the joy of the church, the true Israel of God, by the hope thou infusest into all who have recourse to thee. Thou art the honor of our people, even the whole human race, for thou art the one unfallen specimen of our humanity who today exists in the sight of God and His angels! And when the Almighty looks down on the countless armies of the saints thou alone comest up to the perfect ideal He conceived of thee at thy creation. Mother and Queen of the Holy Rosary, thou hast done manfully, thou who from the beginning hast overthrown all heresies, as the church sings of thee. Thy heart has been strengthened, because thou hast loved chastity in a pre-eminent degree, O incomparable Virgin, and therefore thou shalt be blessed of all forever!"

II

The Origin, and Terminology, and Composition, and Qualities of.

And now, since the great object of this solemnity is to praise and thank God for the great victory gained over the infidel through the Rosary, it is opportune to consider the origin, and terminology, and composition, and qualities of this prayer, so popular and widespread among Christians, and so esteemed by saints and popes and theologians since its introduction into the Church many centuries ago?

Well, dearly beloved, a tradition going back many centuries tells us that it was first given to the world through St. Dominic, the founder of the Friars Preachers, by the holy Mother of God herself. For the saint, being despondent at the ill success of his missionary labors among the heretics of Southern France, prayed with tears to her who is the help of Christians; and she appeared to him, radiant with glory, and gave him the Rosary beads, saying:

"Preach my Rosary, it will be a remedy against all those evils that afflict the Church." And Dominic and his companions preached the Rosary, and the Dominicans have preached the Rosary for the past seven hundred years, with what result a benefited and grateful Church has never ceased to tell.

3. As it is not unusual in the terminology of the Church, the name, itself poetic, graceful, and full of mysteries, symbolizes its characteristics and calls upon a most pleasing picture to the imagination. For "rosary" is a word employed by the writers of antiquity to designate a place planted with rose trees and covered with roses. From the classical langu-

ages the word has passed into the language of the Church, and is applied actually to the devotion I speak of—a devotion which has for its object to honor our Lord and the most Holy Virgin by the recitation of fifteen "our Fathers," and as many decades of the Angelic Salutation, and the meditation on the principal mysteries of Christianity.

The application is not unfitting. For just as the rose is the queen of flowers; so is the Rosary the most excellent of prayers. Moreover, as a plantation of roses charms us with variety and harmony of color, whilst at the same time it fills the air with a delicious perfume; even so, the prayer of the Rosary gives forth perfume and color through the mysteries which it offers for our reflection—mysteries which are the chief articles of our faith.

4. Let us analyze its elements. And, first, as to the prayers or vocal element, as it is called, of the Rosary. They consist of the "our Father," the prayer taught us by the lips of our Lord Himself—a prayer which in its seven petitions, as by so many fiery arrows, wounds the heart of God and moves Him to grant our requests. In the first three petitions we beg our Heavenly Father for the things that concern His own glory. We beg, namely, that His Name may be glorified; that He would always reign over us; that His will be done here on earth, even as it is fulfilled by the angels and saints in heaven. We petition Him for the daily nourishment of our souls, grace and His holy word; but especially for the food of the most holy Eucharist; for the forgiveness of our sins; to be delivered from temptation; and from all evils, spiritual and temporal, that afflict us.

After that we recite, oh, so many times, the Hail Mary. This prayer is made up, as you are aware, of the salutation of the Virgin by the angel Gabriel at the Annunciation; of the inspired words of her cousin, St. Elizabeth; and of the invocation of the Church, saluting her by the grandest of her titles. In this prayer we salute with that solemn "Ave" first pronounced by the angelic messenger, her whom he recognized as his future Queen. We salute her as the Virgin, full of grace—full of grace by reason of the inconceivable riches of sanctity with which she was endowed at her Immaculate Conception; full of grace as a result of her wonderful correspondence with grace during her life on earth; full of grace as a preparation for, and as a consequence of, the ineffable dignity to which she has been raised; full of grace by the consummation of her sanctity in heaven.

We call her blessed among women; for she delivered her people, not as Judith from the sword of the enemy, but from the spiritual thralldom under which the great enemy of souls had captivated the world; and she crushed forever his head by giving a Redeemer to mankind. We invoke her to make intercession with her Divine Son for us now when as soldiers on the field of battle we contend against enemies of our salvation; but especially at that supreme hour of our existence when our fate will be decided for eternity.

And, lastly, we pronounce the "Glory be to the Father," etc.—a prayer of supreme homage and adoration of God and one reminiscent of the triple "holy" sung everlastingly by the four living creatures before the throne of the Lord of Hosts.

5. Have you reflected, dearly beloved, on the deep significance of these prayers? They contain the fundamental truths of our religion on which is built the whole edifice of faith. They proclaim the universal Fatherhood of God: His sovereign dominion; His providence; His mercy; the Incarnation of the Word; the Divine Maternity; the privileges and the power of Mary. They express with a marvelous precision all the wants of nature sanctified by grace—wants of succor; of protection; of reparation; of spiritual and corporal nourishment; of union with God. They praise; they return thanks; they implore help, better than all the hymns and prayers with which the Church has enriched her liturgy.

III

White, Crimson and Gold

Meanwhile, these prayers chosen among all suffice not the votaries of the Rosary. By a harmonious combination of interior and exterior acts we add to them in some sort color and perfume by joining to them and penetrating them with reflections on the mysteries pertinent to the life of Jesus Christ and of His most holy Mother. These mysteries are arranged in three orders or categories — the joyful, the sorrowful, and the glorious. The joyful, considers the chief incidents pertaining to the Incarnation and to our Lord's early life; the sorrowful, are devoted to the meditation on His most bitter passion; and the glorious, carry us to the consideration of His triumph over death and hell and of the rewards conferred on His most holy Mother in return for her life of love and martyrdom. And here again we see the symbolic meaning of the word, Rosary.

The rose has ordinarily but three colors—white, crimson and gold. White—it is the color of innocence and of the joys of infancy. Crimson—it is the color of blood shed in combats of love and sorrow. Gold—it is the color of glory acquired at the cost of labor and sacrifice. White, crimson, and gold, are the colors which the mysteries, joyful, sorrowful and glorious, on which our mind meditates, give to the prayers of the Rosary. And while heaven is rejoiced with this charming variety of color, is not our soul penetrated with the perfume which comes out from each mystery? It inhales deep breaths of the beneficent waves and feels developed within it all the virtues. Faith is nourished with the august virtues which come out from the life itself of the Saviour and of His most holy Mother. Hope is nourished with the promises of which the glories of Jesus and Mary are the solemn guarantees. Charity is nourished with the infinite love which is thrown out by the sacrifice of the cross. Humility, chastity, obedience, strength, meekness, resignation, patience, contempt of worldly goods, desire of heavenly ones; all these virtues press in a crowd at the gates of our soul to enter in with a word, a trait, a circumstance.

Our memory, piously solicited, reminds us that Jesus humbled Himself even to the taking the form of a servant; that Mary proclaimed herself to be the handmaid of the Lord; that she preferred chastity to the honor of the Divine Motherhood; that Christ made Himself obedient even to the death on the cross; that He went before us in opprobrium and allowed Himself to be made as a meek Lamb, who was led to the slaughter; that He was put to death unjustly with words of forgiveness on His lips; that

He rolled back the stone of His sepulchre and ascended to the right hand of His Father; that He has called after Him His Mother: and that both He and she await us to confer on us eternal goods. O mysteries, with what perfume you embalm our hearts! What delicious odor you communicate to our prayers! And can God Himself refuse those charming and holy flowers of our souls: and roses themselves, are they not worthy to be offered to the "Mystical Rose" during the month which is for her a love festival?

IV

The Confraternity of.

See then, dearly beloved, that you esteem at its proper worth this lovely prayer which, as a garden of roses, was planted in the Church by the holy Mother of God herself. Weave chaplets daily of this lovely prayer; chaplets rich in color and perfume by the infusion of true devotion, and present them at the feet of her who is the "Mystical Rose." Nay, my friends, link hands and form a crown of joy to the blessed Mother by yourselves becoming members of the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary which is organized in this church, and which, let us hope, will be a perpetual source of edification to the whole city.

But are we destined to so great an honor? Yes, my friends, for the Rosary as a society may be called once again a place planted with roses.

As among flowers the rose is the first: so is the Rosary among the confraternities of the Blessed Virgin. It is not only the most ancient in its origin; but it is the most illustrious by its remembrances;

the richest by its indulgences and privileges; the most glorious by its influence. Among all it merits to be preferred. And as the petals of the rose, being united in the same cup, receive the same life; exhale the same perfume; circle around a common center; so, the members of the confraternity of the Rosary, being united by the bonds of charity; receiving the same graces; reciting the same prayers; gather around the same mother, Mary.

Joining ourselves then as a living garland around the Queen of Heaven; serving her during life; assimilating the virtues of Jesus and Mary which we daily meditate on in this choicest of prayers; excelling in the beauty of our soul; in the innocence of our life; in the ardor of our charity; in our love of suffering; in the perfection of our prayers; and in the perfume of our virtues; may we expect that God will gather us at death and give us a chosen place in the festivals of eternity, where we shall be forever the crown of Mary.

THANKSGIVING DAY ORATION*

I

Thankfulness Due to God

1. Amid the sorrows of the times in which we live, when we have the grief of seeing great multitudes fall away from the faith and practice of the religion of their ancestors, two grand historic facts stand out before us, facts among the most noteworthy in contemporary history; and these are, that a people, today amongst the greatest in the world, and with every prospect of a future greater than was ever given to any people by God before, in the most public and efficient manner, on the very coin of the realm, proclaim their faith and trust in God; and that this people yearly, through the solemn proclamation of their chief executive, set apart a universal holiday to render solemn thanksgiving to the same God for the benefits of the past year.

These, I say, are two facts of striking magnitude that we should be proud of— facts that are an honor to this twentieth century with all its shortcomings, moral and religious. They are facts that I have no doubt will induce the Giver of all good gifts to cast His eyes propitiously on this great country, and confer on it an abundance of blessings, spiritual and temporal.

2. And now, with regard to this feeling of thankfulness to God for the benefits conferred on us during the past year, let me say that it is one that is prompted by the most generous instincts of our

*Preached in St. Dominic's Church, San Francisco, November, 1910.

nature, and one moreover most proper to the season.

For, what more becoming than that we who were the recipients of so many favors from God during the past year, should now at its close feel our indebtedness to Him?

And the expression of that indebtedness for favors received is due to Him, not as a matter of justice the denial of which would be a sin; but as a matter that pertains to justice; since gratitude is one of the complementary virtues that belong to that great cardinal virtue.

Justice urges us to render to every one that which belongs to him. Gratitude pays homage to the giver, and makes a return to him of thankfulness for favors received.

And what act more pleasing in man than that which pays homage to the goodness of a benefactor? Whilst ingratitude, like the biting north wind, freezes the heart, and paralyzes the hand of the giver; gratitude, on the contrary, unbosoms the generous nature, and incites to a continuance of its gifts; even as the bounteous earth, fanned by the warm breath of summer, gives forth of its munificence to minister to the wants and enjoyments of all.

3. This thankfulness to God is a sentiment awakened in our hearts by holy religion, and is the outcome of a sincere piety, and of a deep faith which tells us that all our goods came from the same bounteous Giver. What does not holy faith tell us of the goodness and bounty of God? He is essential goodness. Unbounded generosity is His chief characteristic. "His mercy is spread over all His

works." From Him as from the centre of all perfection all that goodness and perfection that we recognize in creatures flow. "The whole earth is full of the mercy of the Lord." And how do we not all share in the effects of His liberality? See the many and special benefits conferred on us by Him.

I will not now recall to your memory all the benefits we enjoy in common with the rest of creatures. I will not recall the natural goods of existence, and health, and all material comforts. I will not point out to you the earth teeming with good things to minister to our wants and enjoyments. I will not remind you of the heavenly bodies that God has made to rejoice us with the warmth and brilliancy of their rays. I will not remind you that even the minutest star that twinkles in the remotest heavens gives forth its light for the benefit of us, His favorite creatures. I will not ask you to pay special thanks to Him for all these. But I will recall to your mind the supernatural destiny for which God at our creation designed us. I will recall the benefit of Redemption purchased at the cost of the Blood and Life of Jesus Christ. I will recall the benefit of the Sacraments and all the other helps that God has given us for our spiritual well-being here, and for the attainment of eternal life hereafter. I will recall the benefit of forgiveness of sins at a time when we show ourselves most unworthy of God's mercy. I will recall the continuous stream of grace poured on us especially during the past year. For all these, I say, we should give thanks to God at all times, but especially at the close of a year signalized by many and great favors done on our behalf. This gratitude, honor and fidelity, would demand, were it only toward a human benefactor.

Much more, toward our God to whom we are obliged to pay homage on so many other titles.

Nay, God Himself could not forego demanding the homage of thanksgiving for His many benefits to us. The very perfection of His Being demands that all His gifts return to Him by a homage of thanksgiving and glory.

For, being most perfect, His perfection demands that in all His works He aim at the attainment of the noblest end; and the noblest end of His operations is, and can be, none other than His own glory. As the boundless ocean, whilst it gives by its waters fertility to all lands, levies tribute of the dry earth by the ministry of its streams and rivers; so, the Giver of all good gifts, while conferring being and happiness together with all other natural and supernatural gifts on the human race, will have the homage of thanksgiving and glory to Himself alone.

II

A Homage Paid to God by the Church

1. How the saints and the whole Church acknowledged the goodness of God in Himself and in the effects that spring from Him, all religion and all past history bear witness to. See those lovely psalms inspired by God and sung as the perennial chant of the church militant for thirty hundred years. Are they not one string of praise and thanksgiving to God for His benefits to the human race through all the centuries of its history? "Praise ye the Lord for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever."

And this ceremony that we are privileged to take part in today is one that has descended from the

early ages of the Church. It is one that has been inspired by the deep faith and gratitude of Christians of past times, and that has been joined in by all ranks and classes of the Church's children.

I remember to have passed more than once the Christmas season in the centre of Christendom, and I shall not for long forget the scenes I witnessed yearly at the thanksgiving service there.

Now there are five or six great festivals during the year that stir to its depths the great heart of the Roman people; and among them is this of thanksgiving for the benefits of the old year.

I shall not soon forget the crowds that thronged the great church of the Jesu and its environs to assist at the *Te Deum* of thanksgiving on the occasion, nor their devotion, as that vast multitude joined in the solemn hymn of thanksgiving to God; while the great organ pealed forth its deep-toned song of praise to our blessed Lord exposed for veneration on the altar.

III

The Subject of Our Thanksgiving

2. And we, my brethren, are assembled here today to take part in a similar ceremony of thanksgiving to God for the blessings of the past year; and we also shall have the privilege of kneeling in adoration before the same Sacramental God who will be exposed on our altars throughout the day.

What then shall be the subject of our thanksgiving during those half hours that we hope to spend before the holy altar?

That God has vouchsafed to us in common with

all men, existence, health, and all other natural blessings. That He has watched over us, our friends, our families, our flocks and herds, our business, our employment, our city and whole people, and has preserved us from the many calamities that might afflict us. That He has borne with us in spite of our many failings. That He has conferred on us in common with all the faithful the grace of calling us to the true Church and has endowed us with the many spiritual gifts and privileges we enjoy in this divine institution. That He has conferred on us the special and very prized blessing of the free exercise of our holy religion in this great country where religion is held in honor, and where we are allowed to practise our devotions in peace.

Thus showing ourselves grateful for past benefits, may we give to God the glory that is His due, sanctify ourselves by the practice of this beautiful virtue, and merit a continuance of favors spiritual and temporal from the bounty of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

"And I saw a great multitude which no man could number of all nations and tongues standing before the throne, and in sight of the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands. And they cried with a loud voice, saying: 'Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.' And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the ancients and the four living creatures. And they fell down before the throne upon their faces, and adored God, saying: 'Amen; benediction, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honor, and power, and strength, to our God for ever and ever. Amen.'"—Apoc. vii: 9-12.

I.

The Triumph of the Saints

1. The Church today puts on her grandest ceremonial; clothes herself in her most gorgeous vesture; testifies her greatest joy. And in the exuberance of her gladness she calls on all her children to rejoice in the Lord, whilst celebrating this, the festival of All Saints: a festival in which, she tells us, the angels participate in praise and thanksgiving to the Son of God.

And it is fitting that the Church should rejoice on this grand festival. For, if it be a cause of joy to a mother to see her children raised from a lowly state to power, and position, and wealth; what joy must it not be to the Church to see her beatified ones, who while on earth were poor, and lowly, and despised, and often miserable, raised to the honor which the Apostle contemplated when he was vouchsafed a vision of the glory that surrounds the throne of God?

And it is fitting that we also should join in the triumph of the Church, and celebrate this day with joy and exultation. For, if cities and nations celebrate the achievements of the great men and women who figured in their history; if they commemorate with festivity events of civic or national importance —triumphs which were mean and partial, and which often ended in disaster; how will it not be fitting in us to celebrate with joy and thanksgiving the festival dedicated to the honor of the saints whose triumphs are glorious, everlasting, and perfect?

And if during the course of the year solemn days are appointed for the commemoration of individual saints and of individual events in their history; how great should be our joy, our thanksgiving, and our praise, on this solemn festival dedicated to the honor of God, and the Blessed Virgin, and the whole hierarchy of angels and saints who surround His eternal throne?

2. And it is at this season, dear brethren, and today in particular, that the Church invites us to the contemplation of the Celestial Kingdom, which is to be our everlasting inheritance.

During the course of the year she represents in her liturgy the whole history of the human race. The four weeks of Advent—the first season of the ecclesiastical year, represent the four thousand years that preceded the birth of Christ. During this season she recalls day after day the sad state of the human family before that great event, and repeats the longings of the patriarchs and prophets for the coming of the Messias. She calls upon us, her children, to prepare by prayer and penance for the

mystical coming of Jesus Christ into our hearts at the solemn festival of Christmas.

The season from Christmas to Pentecost brings before us in review the virtues and divine prerogatives of Jesus Christ as they are manifested in His infancy, in His private and public life, in His Passion and Resurrection, up to the time when returning to the bosom of the Father He sends upon His apostles the Holy Spirit to console them in His absence, to strengthen them, and be their Preceptor in the practice of all virtue.

The season from Pentecost to All Saints shows us the Church, the spouse of Christ, speeding onward on her earthly pilgrimage; gathering the nations to her fold; instructing, humanizing, and sactifying them; and sending them on before her to her home in heaven.

During this long interval we sit at her feet learning the beautiful lessons of virtue which day after day she gives us in her liturgy, and striving to copy the examples she puts before us in the lives of her heroes, the confessors, and martyrs, and virgins; the great men and women she produced in every age.

And now, during the last season of the ecclesiastical year, the same Church, to console us in our trials and fill us with hope and courage, raises a little the curtain that conceals the glory that stretches out beyond, and lets a few rays of the celestial light illumine our minds, by bringing before us the everlasting triumph of the saints.

3. And, O brethren, what a subject for contemplation, those triumphs of the saints, as shown in the Office and Mass of today—the ineffable majesty of God enthroned in the midst of the cherubim—the

glorious Humanity of Jesus Christ manifested in all its splendor—the peerless beauty of Mary seated on a throne of dazzling magnificence befitting the Queen of Heaven—the armies of angels and archangels ranged in order before the throne of the Most High—the glittering galaxy of the saints "clothed in white robes and palms in their hands" —the vaults of heaven resonant with the praises of the beatified; "salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb": "Amen, benediction, and honor, and power and strength, to our God for ever and ever."

II.

The Lessons that Triumph Gives Us

1. And what are the lessons that are impressed upon us by the contemplation of this grand spectacle?

First of all, it shows us the estimation in which God holds those whom He has made the sharers of His glory. Yes, now indeed they are dear to Him since He sees them entirely devoted to Him, and that nothing can separate them from Him any longer. And it was this, His estimation of His beloved redeemed ones, that He inspired the Psalmist to express, when He says: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." Precious, indeed, and priceless, "are the souls of those who die in the Lord." They are precious in the sight of the Father, since He sees in their present state the accomplishment of His eternal design in creating them to His own image and likeness, and in ordaining them to beatitude; precious in the sight of the Son, Jesus Christ, who sees in the beatified souls so many prizes

snatched from damnation through means of His labors, and sorrows, and death; precious in the sight of the Holy Ghost, through whom those souls were sanctified; precious in the sight of the whole hierarchy of the angels, who see in the beatified souls their companions in glory, and the love with which the Almighty regards them.

2. But not the Blessed Trinity alone, and the angels; but the Church also testifies her esteem for the beatified souls. She sees in their happy state the victory won through the graces she gave them while they were on earth. From the bosom of their mothers she caught up those holy souls, adopted them, and sealed them with the sign of salvation. She invested them with all the privileges in her power, opened to them the treasury of her graces, and nourished them with her Sacraments.

With what joy did she not witness their growth in holiness under her maternal tutorship. She held before them examples of holiness; brought them under discipline by salutary corrections; counselled them through life; and in death she did not abandon them; but, like the tender mother that she is, she watched over them till she finally handed them into the bosom of their God.

What joy then for the Church today to contemplate the everlasting glory of the saints; and with what reason does she not join in their exaltation? Yes, she recognizes as her children that "great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne, and in the sight of the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands;" and who cry out incessantly with a loud voice, saying: "Sal-

vation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb!"

3. And we, my brethren, what ought to be our sentiments at the contemplation of the glory of the saints today? The sentiments of the brave soldier, when, struggling through fosse and palisade, he sees the flag of his country planted by his comrades on the walls of the beleaguered city; the sentiments of one who seeing a dear relative raised to power and position in the state, feels a pride and joy in his good fortune: the sentiments of one who studying the noble actions of those who won distinction in life, tries to copy in his own conduct the virtues that ennobled them: above all, the sentiment of thanksgiving to God for the honor to which He raised them.

For, are they not all our brethren in the faith of Jesus Christ; and are they not all united to us in the bonds of holy charity? Nay, some of them were our own relatives, or dear companions whom formerly we loved, and whose love for us is now consecrated by the love they bear to God.

The contemplation of their glory should fill us, moreover, with hope and courage in the midst of our trials. For, are they not "those who came out of great tribulations, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the Blood of the Lamb?" What were they when they lived on earth?

4. Some were patriarchs and prophets; men who walked with God, and who were the depositaries of His secrets.

Some were apostles and martyrs; men who burned with zeal for God's honor, and who counted life as

nothing that they might extend His Kingdom upon earth.

Some were confessors and virgins, holy priests and nuns, who spent their lives in the sacred ministry, or in the practice of prayer and penance. But the great bulk of that "great multitude" were men and women who lived in the world like yourselves. Some were poor laborers and artisans who, leading a life of hardship and poverty, sanctified themselves by the faithful discharge of their humble duties, and by performing them with the right intention of pleasing God. Some were merchants and farmers, who practised justice and charity toward their fellow men, and daily grew in grace. Some were faithful fathers and mothers, who accepting their children as charges from God, reared them up in piety. Some were dutiful sons and daughters who, recognizing in their parents the representatives of God, grew up in obedience and sobriety, "like olive plants around the table of the Lord." All were those who repented of the sins they fell into during life.

Lastly, the great subject of our contemplation here today should animate us to the faithful practice of the Commandments and the Gospel counsels; for this was the cause of their salvation. And this is what is particularly brought out in the Gospel of the day, where it is said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the land. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice; for they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of

God. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are ye when they shall revile and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you untruly for My sake. Be glad and rejoice; for your reward is very great in heaven."

ALL SOULS' DAY
DUTY OF PRAYING FOR THE DEAD

"It is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins." —II. Mach. xii, 46.

I

"A Holy and a Wholesome Thought"

1. These words, uttered long ago by the writer of the Book of Machabees, may be quoted with peculiar aptitude today, the day set apart by the Church for the solemn commemoration of all the faithful departed. They are words that remind us of our duties towards those dear departed ones, many of whom we loved while they lived amongst us, but who may now be calling for the succor of our prayers from out the searching fires of Purgatory.

To pray thus for the dead is, according to the sacred writer, a holy thought. It is a holy thought; since it is the effluent of a heart animated with Christian charity; and nothing can be more pleasing to God than to hasten the release of those holy souls who are detained from Heaven by reason of the debts contracted to His justice when they were on earth.

It is a wholesome thought; because, whilst we pray for others who suffer for their sins, we are ourselves reminded of the severity of God's judgments, and are restrained from the commission of sinful acts which merit a like punishment.

The doctrine which teaches that we can make intercession with God for the relief of our suffering brethren is a most consoling one, both to the dying

and to those they leave behind. For to each it is an assurance that the bonds of affection which united them in life are not severed by the grave; and whilst it fills the ones with hope of a speedy deliverance through the prayers of their relatives on earth, it consoles the others by the knowledge that they can still be of service to their departed friends by their prayers and supplications to God, and it strengthens in them the hope of one day joining them in bliss. And the knowledge of this doctrine lays on us the more pressing obligation of praying for them, since we know the holy souls cannot help themselves.

II

The Sufferings of the Holy Souls

2. But have we any conception of the sufferings of the holy souls in Purgatory? Their sufferings are indeed extreme; and were it not that they are sustained by the love of God, and the hope of one day seeing Him in Heaven, their lot would be only a little less miserable than that of the reprobate in hell. For, like them, they have to endure the pain of sense, and the pain of loss, the two tortures which of themselves made up the punishment of the damned.

And first, as to the pain of sense. It is commonly laid down by the doctors of the Church that the souls in Purgatory are punished by fire. And what a fire! Here on earth our material fires are but the instruments given us by God to minister to our wants, and their heat is consequently tempered to suit our convenience. But the fire of Purgatory has been kindled specially by God to execute justice upon sin; and,

hence, it takes its strength from His omnipotent arm. Moreover, it possesses the miraculously given power to act immediately on immaterial spirits. St. Augustine and others tell us that it is in substance the same as that of hell, and that both are sustained by the avenging justice of the Almighty.

And the pain of loss. This is the torture of being kept separated from Him for whom they were created. To enable you to conceive the greatness of this punishment, let me tell you that it alone is sufficient to make up the torture of the damned. For, were there is no fire in hell, no sensible torment, this of itself were enough to constitute damnation; and could the lost souls but enjoy God, their Last End, hell with its eternal fires and accumulation of sensibe torments, would on the instant become a place of joy.

Well, those two torments—the pain of sense and the pain of loss—we are taught, the holy souls suffer alike with the damned; and their condition differs from that of the reprobate only in as far as their tortures are of a temporal nature, and they are cheered by hope and the love of God. Nay, it may be said that the pain of loss is in a sense greater in the holy souls than in the damned. For to the physical tendency which the soul has to become united to its Last End, such as is common to the souls in Purgatory and to the damned; there is added the intense, burning love which possesses the holy souls and impels them incessantly to seek to cast themselves into the bosom of their Beloved.

3. But how long will they be subjected to those terrible torments? Oh, here it is, dearly beloved, that we are confronted with a most mysterious uncertainty. For, that is a thing that is hidden in the

counsels of God. What we are assured of from tradition, from the practices of the Church, and from the revelation of the saints, is that the probation of many of those souls is long and terrible. And, in the first place, we are assured that the least pang of Purgatory is more fierce and searching than all the sufferings than can be endured in this life, so that one moment of these pains seems to them like the accumulated sufferings of many years. What then must be their torture when, as we are assured by the saints, souls are condemned to Purgatory for centuries and ages?

This view the Church seems to take when she sanctions the celebration of daily Masses for individual souls throughout a long course of centuries. Nay, and we have the testimony of souls whom God permitted, for the edification of the faithful, to appear to holy personages after death, to assure us that such really is the case ;and that for faults which to us appear trivial they are condemned to sufferings of many years. These apparitions of the holy souls are attested in many instances in the history of the Church, and believed in by those who are our models and masters in the way of sanctity. It is told, for instance, in the revelations of St. Bridget that there are souls condemned to the fires of Purgatory even to the day of the Last Judgment. St. Vincent Ferrer attests to us, also from a revelation, of persons condemned for a whole year to Purgatory for a single venial sin. We have the famous case in the life of our own St. Malachy, Archbishop of Armagh, where his sister was detained in Purgatory in spite of the prayers of the saint for many years. But let the case of the father of St. Louis Bertrand be a sample

of many others of a similar nature that we read of in the Lives of the Saints.

It is told that his father appeared to him after death in suppliant mien, and with a tearful countenance, praying him to intercede for him with God, that he might be released from the tortures that overwhelmed him. The saint seeing his father in such a pitiable condition, ceased not by day or by night to besiege Heaven with prayers to assuage his father's sufferings. He fasted; he did penance; he daily crucified his flesh with severe disciplines; he obtained the prayers of others; but time and again his father appeared to him in the same mournful plight and in the same suppliant condition. What, with the saint's austere penances, and prayers, and Masses, it took eight years to obtain his release from pain!

And what was the crime he had to expiate during these years, that not even the prayers, and tears, and daily austerities of a saint could obtain his release for so long a time? We are led to understand that he was a man of singular piety, one who for his virtues merited to be the father of a saint; but that during life he had entertained an inordinate attachment for a nobleman who had benefitted him in many ways, which attachment was the cause of impeding him in the practice of virtue.

III

Appeal

4. And, oh brethren, if he who led an exemplary life is detained so long in the midst of these cruel tortures for a fault which we would consider light; what may be the sufferings to which are subjected

those friends whom we loved before now, whose good qualities may have won our affection; but whose imperfections, glaring and not inconsiderable, were known to all?

From out those cruel flames, in piteous accents and with tearful eyes, there appeal to you today—of one, perhaps, a dear father who in toil and poverty wore his strength away in laboring to support you when you were unable to support yourself — a father, I say, whose manly knee you clambered in childhood and who cherished you as the only hope of his declining years—of another, a tender mother who carried you when an infant in her bosom as her only joy and the sole tie that bound her to the world —or it may be an affectoinate sister who shed the perfume of a pure life around her as she moved within the family circle, but who perished like a rosebud on its stem—or a generous brother, or a fond son who met his death through fidelity to you, as he tried to win for you the means of a comfortable subsistence. It may be a fond schoolmate, or an affectionate companion whose captivating conversation won your love in the happy hours of childhood as you played together on the lawn. Or it may be one who suffers for sins committed as the result of your evil example, and who now bears the penalty of your past misdeeds.

From out those cruel flames, I say, those once loved friends call on you today. Their pleading looks and voices seem to reproach you with neglect of that solemn but, perhaps, long forgotten promise made when they pressed your hand in the last convulsive clutch of death, and with palid lips, and eyes in which the parting soul itself seemed to speak,

they made of you their last dying request to remember them when they were gone, and pray for their speedy release from pain. Those same lips that often in rapture pressed your cheek; and those same tender eyes that often told of unutterable depths of love, plead to your unfaithful hearts today; and in the words of the prophet, they call out from their bed of pain: "Have pity on me; have pity on me, at least you, oh, my friends; for, the hand of the Lord hath touched me."

5. Oh, dearly beloved, let this appeal of the suffering souls move your hearts, at least on this great solemnity of the commemoration of all the faithful. And, oh, if sympathy for human suffering exists on earth as one of the noblest attributes of man; if fidelity to departed friends; if generous sacrifice on behalf of those we love; let your hearts dilate in pity, and your tears fall as the rain, over the sufferings of those, earth's noblest children, once your own dear friends, and now the beloved children of God. But let not your sympathy content itself with shedding tears over their sad, but not unhappy lot. Rather let it impel you to try all means to succor them; by prayers, by mortifications, by good works and Masses offered in their behalf. Thus indeed will your sympathy be of avail; and you will have the consolation to know that those souls to whose speedy release you will have contributed will be in a position to make you a generous return, and that God, who rewards us in kind will raise up deliverers for you when your own hour of trial comes, and will grant you a speedy remission of your sins and admission to the abode of rest and peace.

AMERICA DAY—ORATION

AMERICANISM*

I

"The Land of the Free, and the Home of the Brave"

1. This being what is called "America Day," I have the honor of being asked by the members of the Loyal Legion to address you this morning on the subject of Americanism.

It is a great subject and one that demands the most careful treatment on the part of even the most gifted native speaker. How much more when, as it happens in my case, the speaker is only an adopted son of the country?

It is a great subject, I say, for what does America bespeak in the thought and estimation of the peoples of the world? She is known first of all as the *"land of liberty"* or, as our glorious national hymn puts it, *"the land of the free and the home of the brave."* She it was that first among the nations unfurled the banner of liberty and proclaimed as the basis of her political code that all men are equal and enjoy before the law the untrammeled right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. She is esteemed by all as the greatest among the nations of the world in wealth and power, the most solicitous in the pursuit of the arts of peace, the most generous in the outpouring of her goods for the alleviation of the miseries of mankind; withal, the most richly endowed by a beneficent providence with the resources of flood and

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*Delivered in St. Monica's Church, Marshfield, Ore., April 29, 1923.

field, of mine and forest, as a land capable by her resources of supplying in frugal comfort half the population of the world. A grand and noble country then is this of ours, and worth the enconiums of orators and poets the most gifted.

And profitable and necessary also the custom that has grown up amongst us of putting all that is embodied in the word "Americanism" before the citizens. For, among the peoples of the world we are peculiar in this that, whereas, they inherit the traditions coming down to them from a long line of ancestors and are consequently attached to their native soil by many ties of blood and inheritance, a fact that naturally begets in them a passionate love of country and its institutions; we, on the contrary, are a people of yesterday, a nation made up in good part of the elements of all the peoples and races of the old world. As a consequence we are prone to inherit the prejudices and the antipathies of the races from which we sprang.

2. Our country has been designated, I know not by whom, and the thought has been handed down as, "the melting pot of the nations." I do not like the conception which is as false as it is unworthy, that in our America the characteristics of the peoples from whom we sprung have been blended so as to form a new compound, mixed and mongrel, with standard qualities of heart and mind, and of a drab uniformity.

I choose rather the conception of a dear and gifted friend of mine, (Rev. Peter C. Yorke, D. D.), who would idealize our country as a rich and precious casket set with the most brilliant gems of all the countries of the old world. For, who were the men

and women who were the ancestors of those who people America. today? Were they not the most hardy, the most courageous, the most virile and enterprising among the populations of Europe; men and women who dared the hardships of travel by sea and land; who felled the forests, and who cleared habitations for themselves amid the great wastes which before were given over to the bison, and the bear, and the panther, and the other wild creatures of nature? Were they not the men and women who founded institutions of learning and religion where before were only ignorance, bloodshed and savagery? Our country is then not to be conceived as a retort out of which from ingredients before distinct and dissimilar have emanated a product of standard and drab uniformity. Rather the people of America today are distinct among the peoples as possessing the best qualities of the best races of the world. Here Kelt and Teuton, Greek and Latin, Scandinavian and Slav, combine to form a people of various characteristics the most brilliant and sterling of the races from whom they are severally derived.

Our America then, her people, her institutions and her natural endowments are objects to be proud of: and, contemplating them, is it any wonder that we are elated and feel reverberating in the depths of our soul and nature the sentiments embodied in the hymn:

My native country thee,
Land of the noble free,
  Thy name I love.
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills,
My heart with rapture thrills
  Like that above.

II

Patriotism a Great Christian Virtue

But, my friends, there are elements among us, and they are not a few in our times, who would arrogate to themselves and to their order (if, indeed, an order it may be called, or not, rather, a rabble) this sentiment of patriotism; who call themeslves a hundred per cent Americans, and who in their arrogance and bigotry would look askance at all others as Americans of a lower grade; as hyphenates, and cowards, and near traitors, and, therefore, fit objects of their hatred and contempt and persecution.

My friends, a great and wise man, one of the most notable Englishmen of the 18th century, when treating of this subject of lip patriotism, the patriotism monopolized by those one hundred per cent Americans who so arrogantly strut around dressed in pillow-slips and nightgowns; he describes it, I say, as "the last refuge of the scoundrel," and if this characterization be correct, as to me it seems to be, can we not designate the members of this ill-smelling society, this rabble of bunko men and grafters who style themselves one hundred per cent Americans, can we not call them "a pack of scoundrels?"

But true patriotism, what is it, and what does it bespeak? Does it not bespeak as the root form from which it is derived (patria, one' country), declares the love of one' country, a noble sentiment and one which is the property of every good citizen? In this sense we have a grand sentiment embodied in the saying of the great Roman, of him who merited for his virtues and for his achievements to be called

the "father of his country:" "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori;*" "it is a sweet and becoming thing to die for one's country."

Understood in this sense and not in the sense monopolized by these nightriders, we, the Catholics of the United States, have no reason to hang our heads. For have we not proved our patriotism in every emergency of our country's history by the fulfillment of the duties of good citizens? Patriotism I have described as love of one's country. This love of country, whether of one's birth or adoption, is proved by the fulfillment towards her of two grand duties, namely, by submission to her just laws, and by loyal service in her needs, a service that in great straits imposes the readiness to yield up one's life to vindicate her honor, or to remedy her ills.

It is a noble, human sentiment, and as such it is, and should be, the common heritage of all good men, whether pagan or Christian. It is more, and it is good that we understand it thoroughly, it is a great Christian virtue. Our Catholic theologians teach that it is the second of the moral virtues, and comes immediately after religion, the virtue that binds us to God.

"Pro Deo et Patria," for God and country, is a great Catholic motto, and with the true Catholic the one and the other devotion are inseparably united. So much so, that one cannot have a true love of God unless also he be a true lover of his country. And conversely, a Catholic cannot be a true lover of his country unless he also be a sincere worshipper of God.

In fact, patriotism is intimately bound up with, and is, indeed, but an extension of the highest Chris-

tian virtue, charity, or the love of the neighbor. For the law of charity obliges us before all to love and be ready to make sacrifices for those who are nearest and dearest to us. And who so near and dear to us as those who are members of the same community, who share our blood, obey the same laws, and pursue the same life as ourselves?

III

The Two Chief Duties of the Patriot

1. And how nobly our Catholic citizens have come up to the test of true patriotism in our country's need and at the call of duty, is shown by their conduct during the late war. This a few facts well known to all the nation go to demonstrate.

It has been pointed out, and, as a matter of notoriety, that the first American officer to die in the cause of his country over there, was a Catholic. It was equally pointed out as a noteworthy fact, that the last American officer to die in the cause of his country was also a Catholic.

It has been frequently pointed out that among the volunteers, whether in the army, or in the navy, or in the marines, Catholics had a higher percentage of enlistments than their numbers would require.

I need not refer to the well known fact that our great Catholic society, the Knights of Columbus, through their excellent organization and generosity were one of the most conspicuous and efficient units during the great war in the service of the nation. These facts are notorious, and within the knowledge of all, and they are an unassailable proof of our loyalty, though that loyalty has been questioned and de-

nied, and the slander has gone abroad that we could not, from the principles of our religion, be loyal citizens, since, as has been said, we give our first allegiance to a "foreign potentate."

As to the efficiency and whole-hearted devotion of our boys to their country during the great war, I will just mention one fact, which all do not know, and which has never been told you. I have it, however, from one who was present on the occasion, and who was thoroughly conversant with what he says, a veteran of both the Spanish and World wars, a Protestant at the time, to boot; though I have since had the happiness of receiving him into the Church, of which he is a devoted and esteemed member.

When ex-President Wilson was making his "swing around the circle," which ended so disastrously for himself and for his party, before the last presidential election, one of the cities he visited and spoke in was Seattle. The Pacific battleship fleet was in Puget Sound at the time of his visit, and occasion was taken by him to hold a review in Seattle harbor. He boarded the flagship, and the admiral, to grace his presence, gathered together from the whole fleet a picked crew, every man of whom had won honors for efficiency and gallantry during the war. Of that honor crew of 800 men, the cream of the whole Pacific fleet, no less than 600, that is 75 per cent, were Catholics.

2. The second duty required of us as citizens, as patriots, and as Christians, is, as I have said, submission to the just laws of our country. This, all religion and order demands of us. For, submission to the laws of the country of which we are citizens, is submission to God Himself, who wishes order in

the commonwealth. "By Me," He says in Scripture, "kings rule, and lawgivers enact just laws." Hence, St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans, exhorts us, saying: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for, there is no power but from God, and those that are ordained of God. Therefore, he that resisteth the power, resisteth the order of God; and they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation."

This submission to the law is to be rendered, not, mark you, "for fear only," as St. Peter says, "but for virtue's sake, and even when those who administer it are froward," that is to say, when they show themselves harsh and perverse.

But mark what I have said. Our duty to our country demands of us submission to her *just* laws. For every enactment emanating from the people, or from the powers, is not a just law. There are freak laws, laws that are an outrage on the intelligence and on the liberties of the citizens. Such laws are to be treated with the contempt they deserve, and they are unworthy of the respect of the community. These freak laws seem to become more numerous and contemptible every day, and they must raise in the minds of foreigners the doubt as to whether we Americans are gifted with the gravity and judgment that are supposed to be the possession of trusted legislators.

Again, there are unjust and tyrannical laws, laws that trench on the natural and God-given rights of the citizens. Such laws are to be resisted as in contradiction to the law of God and nature. For every law, no matter whence it originates, must be an application of the law of God, as expressed in the Commandments. Any law that infringes on nature's rights, the rights of the citizen, the family, or the

religious convictions of the citizen, is null and void, no matter in what lofty terms it may be couched.

Such a law is that which originated in the late election, I mean the so-called *"Oregon compulsory school law."* It had origin in the deep hatred and prejudice of many of our fellow citizens against us Catholics, because of the profession of our holy religion. It was carried through by playing on the lowest passions and prejudices of the most ignorant and unworthy.

This compulsory school law is to be resisted, therefore, and to be brought to nought by every legitimate means.

Nor has it been passed with the good will of the majority of our non-Catholic fellow citizens. Rather, the upright sense of the great body of our fair-minded American citizens of every persuasion is opposed to it, and with their help and good will, we will, please God, tear it out of the statute book and vindicate the true principles of Americanism, which, as laid down by the Fathers of the Republic, declare the untrammeled freedom of every citizen in the profession of whatever religion he chooses.

I have now drawn your attention to the two chief duties you owe to our beloved America. Love your country; love her people; love her institutions; obey her just laws; give her an unstinted service in her needs; and, should an emergency arise which may threaten the stability of her institutions, her power, or her good name, be prepared to yield up your life if necessary for their preservation. This is but the duty of all, and the one thing that deserves the honored title of true Americanism.

THE IRISH MISSIONARIES*

I

A Day of Gladness to the Peoples.

1. It is a source of joy and pride to me, ministering as I have been among you, to witness the enthusiasm with which you, children of this far off land, have taken up the celebration of the festival of Ireland's great Apostle.

And this enthusiasm is the more remarkable as many of you have come from places little affected with Irish blood or sentiment. And I must take it as in part an appreciation of the good Irish priests and people who have been, and are, resident among you.

Now I cannot but think that St. Patrick's Day, coming as it does, in mid-Lent, was destined by the providence of the same God who rules the Church, to be to all peoples, and not merely to the Irish, a day of rejoicing and gladness. Hence do we see the penitential character of the season interrupted by the celebration of this feast in every quarter of the world.

As it is here in our country where St. Patrick's children are so numerous, so it is in Canada; so, in Australia; in Argentina; in South Africa; in New Zealand; not to speak of the home countries, Ireland, Scotland, England, where in every town and village there is festivity and rejoicing.

And why should it not be so? For St. Patrick,

*Preached in St. Peter's Church, The Dalles, Oregon, St. Patrick's Day, 1924.

through the Irish missionaries and people, has been a benefactor to all lands through the blessing of Catholicity which they have carried to all, and illustrated before all, by their virtues and their fidelity to the Church.

2. But it is not to the great work of Catholicity carried on all over the world today by the Irish laity and clergy alike that I would direct your attention tonight. My task is to lay before you the story of the wondrous work performed by the Irish missionaries in early times when, in the greatest crisis of the centuries, they saved Catholicity and civilization in Europe.

The Darkest Period of the Dark Ages

It was the darkest period of the dark ages beginning with the latter half of the sixth century. The Teutonic nations of northern Europe had already battered to pieces the externals of the Catholicity and civilization of Rome. Ostrogoth, and Visigoth, and Vandal, and Frank, and Hun, and Burgundian, and Lombard, had swept over southern Europe like a devouring fire leaving nothing but ruins in their track. Christianity which had been so prosperous in the Latin countries, and which had been built up by the sacrifice and at the cost of some eleven millions of martyrs blood, was everywhere assailed, and all Europe was one scene of butchery and devastation. These fierce and pagan peoples seemed to carry all before them, and nothing could withstand the attacks of their sustained and desperate valor. The Goths twice sacked Rome itself, and all Italy was subjected to their fierce and barbarous sway. So also were Gaul and Spain, where they built up the Spanish monarchy, which, with varying vicissitudes of defeat and glory subsists to the present day. The

Franks overran Gaul, the most flourishing of the Roman provinces, and gave it their name and monarchy. The Vandals following in the track of former conquerors won for themselves one of Spain's richest territories, and gave it also their name, "Vandalitia," crossed over to Roman Africa, and gave everything up to sack and pillage, and by their ruthless acts won for themselves the unenviable reputation which they bear to this day. Attila and his Huns carried devastation everywhere. It was his boast that he was the "scourge of God," and that no green thing ever grew where once was felt the touch of his horses hoof.

In Britain, bands of pirates from the low countries, variously styling themselves Angles, Saxons, Jutes, etc., fell upon the country, slaughtered the inhabitants wholesale, and reduced what had before been a fair province of the Church, to a state of lawless savagery. In a word, the Church of Rome after four centuries of suffering and sacrifice saw Christianity again reduced to its elements, and she had to commence one more the conquest of the world, as she did on the day when the apostles crossed the frontiers of Judea.

What was to be done? The Pope of Rome saw on all sides nothing but sack and ruin, and the resources of the Church entirely exhausted. The seats of learning were everywhere reduced to ashes, and a profound darkness and ignorance settled on the devoted continent.

Scotland Receives the Faith

1. But in the midst of the barbarity and ignorance with which Europe was covered a strange race of men began to appear. They were tall and majestic in their carriage. Their hair shorn in front

from ear to ear, was allowed to fall in rich masses on their back and shoulders. Over their mantles of undyed homespun were slung leathern wallets filled with books and parchments; while suspended from their necks many carried small harps, from which they knew how to evoke music of surpassing sweetness.

Who were those strange race of men who now began to appear in the public places, and in the assemblies of the people?

My friends, they were the Irish missionaries. On that not inhospitable land of Europe they began to appear; at first, in their hundreds, and a little after in their thousands and tens of thousands, till there was not a spot from Gaul to the Bosophorus, and from the Vistula to Egypt and northern Africa, that had not been pressed by the sandaled feet of the Gospel messenger.

2. Early in the vanguard went forth the two Columbas with their trains of twelve companions. First went Columbkille, or Columba of the church. He had already founded thirty monasteries in Erin, before he crossed that narrow stretch of sea that separates Ireland from Alba, followed by hundreds of others, and founded his mother house in the Isle of Hy, the renowned Iona. From that vantage spot he sailed over to the mainland; brought under discipline the half-pagan Scots of Argyle and the Hebrides; climbed the Grampians; and converted the whole nation of the northerns Picts, with their king, Brude; and founded three hundred dependent churches and monasteries.

This famed monastery, one of the most venerable in Christendom, was for many hundred years a

source of light and grace to both Scotland and England. And this was so conspicuous in the case of the former country that its kings chose it as their burial place and conferred on the monks residing there many privileges and honors.

The Conversion of England

Half a century later Saint Aedan passed from the same parent monastery of Iona, founded the new mother house on the Island-peninsula of Lindesfarne on the Yorkshire coast, and undertook the conversion of the Angles of Northumbria. The faith had already been preached to these people by St. Paulinus, the disciple of St. Augustine, the Roman. But on the death of their good king, Egbert, which took place in a great battle fought against the pagan King of Mercia, 633, they returned to the worship of their pagan gods, Thor and Wodan; and Paulinus fled the kingdom, to which it seems he never afterwards returned, and the work of their conversion had to be done over again.

In the evangelization of the apostate nation Aedan and his fellow missionaries were powerfully assisted by their pious king, St. Oswald. This king, together with his brothers had been reared in Ireland, and there they imbibed the deep faith and piety which they saw practised all around them. In this northern country the Irish monks founded many noted monasteries and churches. Such were, for instance: Melrose, Whitby, Kilremont, St. Hilda, Glenfinan, Knobbersburg, Bosham, Enchelen, Don, etc., and in time they brought back to the faith the whole nation of the Angels, north of the Humber. From Northumbria they crossed into the neighboring kingdom of Mercia, or the Midlands, and brought

the people to the faith, together with their king, the son of the fierce pagan, Penda. As to the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy, they also owe their conversion in great part to the Irish Missionaries.

Malmesbury, and "Glastonbury, of the Irish" were centers of light to the Saxons of the West and South; while the great Irish monastery of St. David's, in Wales, sent its contingents of ardent missionaries to evangelize the Western regions. "Their missionaries," says the learned historian, Alice Stopford Green, "wandered on foot over Middle England, and along the eastern coast, and even touched the channel in Sussex. In 662, that is, seventy-five years after the landing of St. Augustine in Kent, there was only one bishop in the whole of England, who was not of Irish consecration; and this bishop, Agilberct, of Wessex, was a Frenchman who had been trained for years in Ireland. (P. 47). And to sum up, in the words of the learned historian W. P. Joyce: "It is now admitted that England owes its conversion to Irish missionaries, partly from Iona, and partly from the mother country, more than to Augustine and the Roman monks." (Soc. Hist. of Ir. Vol. I, p. 337). An unprejudiced witness to the same fact is the distinguished Anglican bishop of Durham, Dr. Lightfoot, who says: "Of the eight kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon confederation, that of Kent was alone exclusively won and retained by the Roman Monks." And again, he says: "To Aedan is to be attributed the first place in the evangelization of our race. * * * Augustine was the apostle of Kent, but Aedan was the apostle of England." (Lightfoot, p. 11).

The Irish Missionaries on the Continent

Half a century earlier, while Columbkille was converting the Picts of Scotland, his great namesake, Columbanus, crossed over to northern France, and founded his monastery of Annegrey, among the Vosges mountains. Afterward he moved to Luxeuil, in the kingdom of Austrasia, became the pioneer of the missionaries of Continental Europe, and converted, or brought back to the faith, whole peoples.

I can announce in a short talk like this only the high spots of culture brought about by the Irish missionaries; but behind them there is a world of history and poetry of religion. Thus, from Luxeuil alone during the lifetime of its founder, as we learn from his companion and biographer, St. Jonas, six hundred and twenty missionaries went into Bavaria to evangelize the people. St. Bernard relates that one great Irishman alone, St. Luan, of the monastery of Bangor, was the founder of a hundred monasteries, many of them in Continental Europe; and he says that whole swarms of sages came forth successively from distant Hibernia, like swarms of bees from the mother hive; landed on the shores of France; and spread themselves through all the countries of Europe.

"From the great monastery of Lismore," he says again, "sprang a hundred Irish monasteries, many of them abroad." In Burgundy the children of St. Columbanus founded the monasteries of Lure, Beze, St. Ursanne, St. Roman, Moutier, Remiremont. In Lombardy and Switzerland, the famous monasteries of Bobbio and St. Gall. In France and Belgium, Fontinelle, Joumieges, Jouarre, Rebais, Leuconnais, St. Bertin. By other Irish missionaries were founded Meaux, Brabant, Salzburg, Mechlin, Altmünster,

Peronne, Lagny, Fosses, Sackingen-on-Rhine, Maintz, Cologne, and a hundred others.

A great Bavarian prelate of the Midwest, when preaching to a mixed congregation of German and Irish Catholics, took occasion to exhort them to mutual love and respect, irrespective of nationality. "The Bavarians," said he, "should especially bear in mind that they were indebted to the Irish for their Catholicity, the forefathers of the present Irish people having brought the glad tidings of the Gospel to Germany long centuries ago."

In a German work called "Bavaria Sancta," this good bishop gives the history of the introduction of Christianity into his native country. The book gives the names of no less than twenty-four Irish Saints of Bavaria.

Nor was this output of Irish missionary zeal for a generation alone, or only to a few peoples. It lasted for 600 years, and was extended to all the peoples of Western Europe. France, Italy, Switzerland, Bavaria, Franconia, Thuringia, Alemannia, Saxony, the Netherlands, Austria, Denmark, even the distant Russias: all were wholly or in part brought to a knowledge of the faith, through the zeal of the ubiquitious and irrepressible Irish missionaries.

Their Wondrous Learning

As to their learning, it was the wonder of their times. Says Dr. Wattenback in his "Congregations of the Irish monks in Germany," "It was thus when the whole world seemed irrevocably sunk in barbarism the Irish went forth into every part of the world to spread Christianity and knowledge." Says Kuno Meyer in his "Introduction to Ancient Irish Poetry," "Ireland had become the heiress to the

classical and theological learning of the Western empire of the fourth and fifth centuries, and a period of humanism then ensued which culminated during the sixth and following centuries." Says Frederick Keller, of Zurich, in his "Illuminations and Facsimiles from Irish Manuscripts in the Libraries of Switzerland:" "The eleventh and twelfth centuries were the greatest for the Irish monks on the continent. Scottish (i. e. Irish) monks were found in almost every large city in southern Germany." "They were examples of a rigid abstemicism," says Dr. Wattenback, writing of the Irish monks of those centuries, "and filled with ardent faith that incited them to go afar."

Says M. Henri Martin, in his History of France, Vol. II, p. 139: "The disciples of Columbanus wrought fundamental changes both in the men and in the soil of the Northern provinces, and to them is really due the honor commonly awarded to the Benedictines, who have only reaped the fruit of their labors." * * "The entire seventh century belongs in a moral aspect to the students of Ireland."

Says Scaliager le Jeune, the French critic: "In Charlemagne's day almost all the learned men of Europe were Irishmen." Says Alice Stopford Green, in her "Irish Nationality:" "Probably in the seventh and eighth centuries no one in Western Europe spoke Greek who was not Irish, or taught by an Irishman." (P. 54).

Says Professor Zimmer, of Berlin, in his learned book entitled, "Irish Influence in Medieval Culture:" "Ireland can indeed lay claim to a great past. She can not only boast of having been the birthplace and abode of high culture in the fifth and sixth centuries at a time when the Roman empire was being under-

mined by the alliances and inroads of German tribes, which threatened to sink the whole Continent into barbarism—but also of having made strenuous efforts in the seventh, and up to the tenth century, to spread her learning among the German and Romance peoples, thus forming the actual foundation of our present Continental civilization."

Says M. Darmesteter: "The classic tradition, to all appearances dead in Europe, burst out into full flower in the "Isle of Saints," and the Renaissance began in Ireland over 700 years before it was known in Italy. During three centuries Ireland was the asylum of the higher learning which took sanctuary there from the uncultured states of Europe. At one time Armagh, the religious capital of Christian Ireland was the metropolis of civilization."

Says Alice Stopford Green, again: "Every English missionary from the seventh to the ninth century had been trained under Irish teachers, or had been for years in Ireland enveloped by the ardor of their fiery enthusiasm. When this powerful influence was set aside, English mission work died down for a thousand years." (Ir. Nat. p. 55).

Is it any wonder that the spiritual Father of all those missionaries was a favorite among the saints, and that his festival should be an occasion of joy to all the benefitted peoples?

III

"The Isle of Saints and Scholars"

1. If you ask how it fared at home in Ireland itself, I can only say that North, South, East and West, the valleys were aglow with the torch of holiness and learning, and that students came in crowds from all those countries in search of both; that they

received a joyous welcome, and were provided generously with food, books and lodging. Thus, Armagh contained its seven to thirteen thousand students, and was deemed the first university of Europe.

Clonmacnois, in Westmeath, "where the river Shannon flows," had its quota of six thousand. Glendaloch, Clonard, Bangor, Lismore, Monasterboice, three thousand each. It is told in the Annals of Ireland how seven ships laden with foreign students passed up the Shannon in one day to commence their scholastic course in Mungret. Besides these scores of other seats of learning studded the land; and Ireland itself in those days, and for hundreds of years, was universally known by the honorable title of "The Island of Saints and Scholars."

When on the Continent a noted person was missed from his usual haunts, the question was asked whether he had not gone to receive discipline and knowledge in Erin. Nor were the scholars of Ireland of common lineage only. The sons of kings were there. Thus Dagobert II. King of Austrasia, in the seventh century, was educated in Slane, the royal college, in my native county of Meath. He is said to have acquired all the wisdom of the Scots. I myself have stood upon the tombstone of one of his sons who died as a student in this monastery.

The kings of Northumbria, St. Oswald, Oswiu, Aldfred, were among Ireland's distinguished students; as was also, according to a well founded opinion, Alfred the Great, King of Wessex, who defeated the Danes, and restored the Saxon power in England. Almost every saint and distinguished man of the Saxon race was either taught in Ireland or by an Irishman.

If we are to believe the above-said King, Aldfred,

the Ireland of those days must have been a pleasant place to live in. For in the topographical poem written by him on his departure for his native Northumbria, we find the following lines:

"I found in Inisfail, the fair,
In Ireland, while in exile there,
Women of worth; both grave and gay men:
Learned clerics; heroic laymen.

"I traveled its fruitful provinces round,
And in every one of the five, I found,
Alike in church and in palace hall,
Abundant apparel and food for all."

My friends, I fear that I am trespassing too much upon your patience in thus relating the glories of my country. Let me conclude by giving you one or two testimonies as to how much those services of Ireland to civilization and religion were and are appreciated by the beneficiaries of Irish generosity and zeal. It is all typified in that unique demonstration of honor accorded by Pope St. Gregory the Great, in the last year of the Sixth Century, who ordered all the bells of Rome to be rung in welcome to St. Columbanus, at that time perhaps the greatest figure in the Church.

Says Cardinal Mercier and the Belgian Bishops, in their reply to the Irish Bishops, in 1920, "Does not Belgium herself owe the signal grace of belonging to the Church largely to the first pioneers of Christian civilization from Ireland. . . Ireland, won to the faith in the fifth century, seems to have received from Divine Providence a special mission for the Apostolate."

My friends, I have now done. Let me only say as a last word that there are venerated today as patrons of dioceses, cities, and parishes: in Belgium, says Cardinal Mercier: more than 30 Irish saints; in Bavaria, according to the testimony of others, twenty-eight; in France, forty-seven; in Germany, a hundred and forty-five; so that, not to speak of England and Scotland, where Irish patron saints are innumerable, there are venerated on the Continent no less than three hundred Irish saints who labored for, and in many cases shed their blood for the faith in the spread of the Gospel in Europe.

THIRD PART

THE PALM SUNDAY PROCESSION

I

The Historic Background

As we are about to take part in the ceremonies of Holy Week I wish, dearly beloved, to impart to you beforehand some words of information concerning the mysteries these ceremonies commemorate. This information will enable you to assist at them with a more enlightened and chastened piety.

This week is called in the language of the Church, "The Great Week," and "Holy Week." It is called "The Great Week," because of the great events it commemorates, and "Holy Week," because in it was enacted the tragedy through which was accomplished the Redemption of the world.

When our Lord with His disciples was making His last journey to Jerusalem, He said to them: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished that were written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man. For, He shall be betrayed, and spit upon, and mocked, and scourged; and after they have scourged Him they will put Him to death." And then, lest they should be scandalized, He added: "And on the third day He shall rise again." It is not without its significance that this Gospel is read on Quinquegesima Sunday, the Sunday before the opening day of Lent. For, one of the purposes for which the Lenten season was instituted was to enable us to prepare ourselves by prayer and penance for the worthy commemoration of our Lord's Sacred Passion. Hence, this purpose is pointed out repeat-

edly in the sacred liturgy during the Holy Season and our minds are lifted to the contemplation of the great events that culminated in His Crucifixion and death on Calvary.

And now as to the opening ceremony of Holy Week, the solemn procession of Palm Sunday. It commemorates the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem a few days before His Passion. It was only a few days after our Lord's Baptism in the Jordan that St. John the Baptist seeing Him pass by, cried out: "Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world." Those whom the Baptist addressed were Jews who fully understood the allusion of the prophet. And it told as well as words could say that he pointed to the Messias, to the "Expected of nations," whose appearance all mankind looked forward to from the beginning of the world. It called to mind likewise the Paschal lamb, the yearly sacrifice of which commemorated the delivery of their forefathers from the slavery of Egypt.

It is told in the sacred Books how Moses was commanded by God to go into Pharao and demand the liberation of His people. Pharao and all the Egyptians were obstinate and would not let the people go, and God in punishment for their disobedience brought upon them one after another the ten plagues that devastated their country.

At length the Almighty, being grieved at their obstinacy, determined to exercise upon them a master stroke of His justice in the slaying of the first-born in every home throughout the land: and it was brought about in this way. By His order Moses summoned the people and ordered them to select a

lamb of a year old for every household on the tenth day of the month, Nisan, the first month of the Jewish year; and on the fourteenth day of the month they were to slay it and with its blood sprinkle the lintels of the doors of every Jewish household. And the people were to eat the lamb spitted and baked together with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, and in the guise of those about to undertake a journey. On that night the Lord sent His destroying angel over Egypt, and he entered every house the doors of which were not sprinkled with the blood of the lamb, and he slew the first-born therein, from the child of Pharao upon his throne, to the child of the peasant in his shieling, so that there was mourning and lamentation in every home throughout the land.

The people were thorouoghly alarmed, and in their terror they thrust out the Israelites, so that they were at liberty to go. This portentious event, the greatest in the history of their nation, God commanded not only to be recorded in their annals, and by a weekly commemoration in their synagogues, but also to be commemorated by an eight day solemnity of the Passover as the first and greatest solemnity of their race and nation. The festival was solemnized yearly by all the people throughout the thirteen hundred years of their history down to the time of our Lord.

How great was that annual gathering of the Jews we may learn from the statement of Josephus, their historian, who tells us that on a certain occasion he was treating about, no less than a hundred and forty-four thousand Paschal lambs were slain. The people knew that the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb had not

only an historic, but also, and chiefly, a prophetic import, and that it looked forward to the Redemption of mankind through the agency of the long looked for Messias.

II

The Triumphant Entry

The fullness of time is come. The seventy weeks of years foretold by Daniel the prophet are fulfilled, "when the Saint of Saints should be anointed, and the Christ should be slain." All the people are in expectation. Behold, the Victim is prepared and ready for the sacrifice.

Now it was customary with the ancient peoples, with the Jews, as with the pagans, when they were about to offer a victim to the Divinity whom they worshipped, to have it dedicated to the sacrifice with testimonies of joy. The animal was decked out in richest trappings and led in procession by the priests to the place of imolation.

Jesus has now reached the apex of His carreer. It was only a few days before that He accomplished the most striking miracle of His life in the raising of Lazarus from the dead. All Judea and Jerusalem are moved. The people expect that now He is about to proclaim Himself the King of the Jews, and to inaugurate that reign of glory that is to outrival in brilliancy the reign of Solomon, the golden age of Jewish greatness.

The Master is at Bethpage, only two or three miles from the holy city, to the east of the Mount of Olives. It is midday of the tenth day of the month Nisan when Jesus, the true Paschal Lamb, is seen descending the slopes of Olivet, seated on an ass's colt, fulfilling the prophecy of their sacred books,

concerning the Messias. The people are elated as perhaps they never were before. In their enthusiasm many take off their graments and strew them in His path, and as with one accord they cut down branches of palm, and olive, and fig trees, and carry them aloft in triumph and proclaim, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

This is the festival we commemorate today, my brethren, the festival of preparation of the Son of God as the Victim of atonement for our sins. It recalls the great day when Jesus, the Lamb of God, went forth by the will of His Father, and was solemnly dedicated as the Victim of atonement for the sins of the human race. The high priest at the solemn procession of today represents the Eternal High Priest, who is no other than Jesus Christ Himself, and who by His sacrifice is to accomplish the Redemption of the world.

And we also who are co-sacrificers join in the procession carrying palm and olive branches in our hands, about to take part in the oblation. It is right and proper then that we take part in the great ceremony of dedication of the Victim with a lively faith and with a knowledge of the mystery that is commemorated.

Let these be your dispositions today as you join in the commemorative procession. And may God who inspires the Church to make this yearly commemoration of the great mystery, animate us with sentiments of piety; fill us with this faith and knowledge; so that we may give glory to God, honor to His Church, and love and loyalty to Jesus Christ, the true Lamb of God who cometh in His capacity of Messias to take away the sins of the world.

HOLY THURSDAY CELEBRATION

I.

The Feast of the Passover

1. It was the evening of the fourteenth day of the month Nisan. The fullness of time laid out in God's merciful designs toward mankind had come. The seventy weeks of years foretold by Daniel the prophet had been fulfilled, when, as he says, "Transgression should be finished upon the people and upon the holy city; when sin should have an end; and iniquity should be abolished; and everlasting justice should be brought about: and vision and prophecy should be fulfilled; and the Saint of saints should be anointed; and the Christ should be slain; and the people that were to deny Him should no longer be His."

Everything had been prepared for the celebration of the great Solemnity. The Jews in their hundreds of thousands; shall I say, in their millions, had assembled from every country of the known world, within, and in the environs of Jerusalem. A hundred thousand Paschal lambs were slain and were being prepared for the great supper. First, they were disembowled, cleaned and spitted. Not a bone of theirs was permitted to be broken. Two rods pilled and crossed laid open their interior, lively figure of the Crucified. And thus prepared they were roasted before the fire, and eaten with unleavened bread and wine and bitter herbs, by the whole people in their tribes and families.

In a word, the Passover, greatest of Jewish festivals, was being celebrated now for the last time as

the legitimate worship of Jehoveh. The priests had been assembled all day in the temple, and were engaged in the performance of the most magnificent ceremonial of their worship.

But it was a mere empty rite from which the spirit of devotion had departed. The faith and piety of former times were then no more, and the leaders of the people were little better than pagans.

The chief priests and scribes had already entered into a conspiracy to bring about the death of Jesus Christ, and had even completed a compact with the apostate disciple to apprehend Him and have Him taken away.

II

The Sacrifice of the New Law

2. The last few days of His life were crowded ones for Jesus. He purged the temple of the buyers and sellers who profaned it, and scourged them out of the holy place. He openly taught in the sacred cloisters, and pronounced some of His most telling discourses. He denounced the scribes and pharasees in that most terrible of denunciations. He foretold the destruction of the city and its inhabitants, a figure of the more terrible calamities that should overtake the world in preparation for the last day of General Judgment. He told them that in punishment for their crime of the murder of the Man-God they would be no longer His people. He cursed the barren fig-tree, figure of unprofitable souls. He pronounced some of His most striking parables.

And now the hour of the Delivery has come. He ordered two of His disciples to prepare the Pasch

to be celebrated in the Upper Chamber, as described in the Gospels. The paschal lamb was slain and eaten. The history of its institution was rehearsed by Him as president of the feast. The prescribed hymns were chanted, the last words of the legitimate worship of Israel before it should be changed into the more spiritual and sublime worship of the New Law. And then He, "the High Priest of the good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hand, that is, not of this creation: neither by the blood of goats or of calves, but by His own Blood" inaugurated the new Sacrifice by which He was "to enter once for all into the Holies having obtained an eternal Redemption."

So, taking the unleavened bread from off the supper table, He blessed, and broke, and gave to His disciples, saying: "take ye and eat; *This* is My Body which shall be delivered for you; do this for the commemoration of Me." In like manner also the chalice, after he had supped, saying; "this Chalice is the New Testament in My Blood, (the central mystery of our faith), this do ye as often as you shall drink for the commemoration of Me. For as often as you shall eat this Bread, and drink this Chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until He come." (1 Cor. II.) In this He acted in the capacity of the "High Priest for ever according to the Order of Melchisedech," and inaugurated the more perfect Sacrifice of the New Law. By it He placed Himself in the guise of the true Paschal Lamb whose imolation should bring about the Redemption of all mankind. For, as is argued by St. Paul: "If the blood of goats and oxen, and the ashes of an heifer, being sprinkled, sanctify such as are defiled to the cleansing of the flesh; how much more shall the Blood of Christ, who

by the Holy Ghost offered Himself unspotted unto God cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God? and, therefore, He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of His death for the Redemption of those trangressions which were under the former Testament, they that are called may receive the promise of Eternal inheritance."

But the Sacrifice of the Supper Chamber was not a complete Sacrifice; for it looked forward to the Crucifixion for its accomplishment; and, hence, no sooner was it offered, and the hymn of thanksgiving chanted, than our Lord, with His disciples departed, no longer in the guise of High Priest, but of Victim. He took His direction towards the Garden of Gethsemani, there and then to enter on His Passion, which was to end in His Crucifixion and death upon Calvary.

That Sacrifice of the New Law which was inaugurated in the Supper Chamber, and accomplished upon the Cross, is still perpetuated in the Mass and will be, to the end of time. It is that we commemorate this morning of Holy Thursday, and it is commemorated throughout the Church with all the solemnity and grandeur of detail that our poverty here below permits. Hence, those solemn ceremonies of today which are among the most impressive in Christian worship. Hence, those lines of devout communicants who with chastened minds and grateful hearts approach the Holy Altar rails to receive Him who gave Himself on this day to be the food and nourishment of our souls. Hence, the decorated altar of repose with its innumerable lights, before which multitudes of devout worshippers prostrate themselves

in profound adoration as before the Sacred presence of their Sacramental God. Hence, the peculiarly religious character of the time which makes Holy Thursday one of the holiest of the holy days of the Christian year.

It is a day which impresses us with the nearness of God, and gives a new sense and meaning to the words of the Gospel: "The Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us;" and to the other great words recorded in the Apocalypse: "And I, John, saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying: Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself with them, shall be their God."

Enter into the spirit of those solemnities, dearly beloved. They are among the tenderest and sweetest of all the solemnities we are invited to by the Church to take part in; among the most fruitful and advantageous to souls seeking union with their God; among the grandest and the most elaborate the Church puts forth in the worship of her Spouse.

THE THREE HOURS AGONY

or

Reflections on the Seven Last Words of Our Saviour on the Cross

At twelve o'clock on Good Friday the pious participants enter on the service by the chant or recitation of the following hymn:

O Come and Mourn

O come and mourn with me awhile,
  See, Mary calls us to her side;
O come and let us mourn with her,
  Jesus, our Love, is crucified!

Have we no tears to shed for Him,
  While soldiers scoff and Jews deride?
Ah! look how patiently He hangs;
  Jesus, our Love, is crucified!

Seven times He spoke, seven words of love,
  And all three hours His silence cried
For mercy on the souls of men;
  Jesus, our Love, is crucified!

Come, take thy stand beneath the Cross,
  And let the blood from out that side
Fall gently on thee drop by drop;—
  Jesus, our Love, is crucified!

THE PROMISE OF OUR LORD

"I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of prayers. And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for an only son; and they shall grieve over Him as the manner is to grieve for the death of the first-born . . . And they shall say to Him: 'What are these wounds in the midst of Thy hands?' And He shall say: 'With these I was wounded in the house of them that loved Me.'"—Zach. XII, XIII.

THE FIRST WORD

"When they were come to the place which is called Calvary, they crucified Him there; and the robbers, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. And Jesus said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."—Luke XXII, 33-34.

The sacred liturgy, the devotions, the whole spirit of the time, bring painfully before us in those days, and especially on this great day of the Passion, the sufferings and death of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Everything in the Church's service is designed to give expression to the details of the great tragedy. We are brought to contemplate one by one the scenes of the Passion—the Agony in the Garden; the Scourging; the Crowning with Thorns; the Carrying of the Cross; the Crucifixion and Death on Calvary. The sermons, the public prayers, the adoration of the cross, all call us to the deep contemplation of the humiliations and sufferings of the "Man of Sorrows."

But our contemplation of the scenes of the Passion however sincere and earnest will not enable us to touch the deep depths of the Saviour's generous

love for us if the motives of His sufferings are not revealed to us, and if we do not learn something of the emotions stirred within Him during the period. And these we can come to an adequate knowledge of only through His own words expressed or wrung from Him in His sorrows.

It was Jesus himself who first gave utterance to the aphorism which has since won the assent of all; that

"Out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth Speaketh."

And if this is so, then, from the utterances given forth by Him on the Cross we gather something of His generous abandonment of Himself to sacrifice for love of us, and the mental workings that love was the cause of during the Passion.

The purport and meaning of the words of our Saviour on the Cross I would try to expound for you if knowledge were given me, and it is the one remark that I will make concerning them that in their entirety they show us the overpowering charity of our God towards us, inasmuch as they express an entire and unreserved sacrifice of Himself for us and a generous offer of pardon to all, even to His unrelenting enemies.

It was at the beginning of the three hours' agony. The Jews had given vent to all their cruelty and malice against Him. He saw the deep hatred entertained for Him by the chief actors in the tragedy. He felt the callous conduct of the soldiers, and their excessive cruelty towards Him. He knew the malice of the chief priests and the scribes who urged on the multitude to greater violence against

Him. He saw the cowardice and infidelity of the disciples, only one of whom dared to be present to cheer Him as He lay upon the Cross. He felt the malice of mankind, for we were all there; and that frenzied crowd were but the executioners of our malicious will. And it was amid such a scene that He lifted His eyes toward heaven and gave utterance to the sublime prayer for forgiveness of all:

"Father, Forgive Them;

for they know not what they do."

Oh, sublime and touching prayer! Prayer meet to come from the heart and lips of a God dying for the salvation of His murderers! Magnanimous example to all mankind in the practice of heroic charity, and which stimulates the thought that if our God prayed thus and died for us while we were still sinners and His enemies, what will He not do for us now that we are His friends and His Redeemed ones?

The prayer of the Saviour on the Cross is the same that has been breathed from the depth of His Godhead by the Word from all eternity. It is the prayer through the efficacy of which we are all saved. From the height of the Cross it reverberated throughout the universe and reached back even to the beginning of time. By anticipation it was the source of the salvation of all the just who lived from the days of Adam.

Oh, may the example of Jesus on the Cross be to us all our lives an incentive to the practice of this greatest of all the virtues. And may it teach us magnanimity of thought in favor of all men; that we may show ourselves worthy followers of our crucified Saviour, and may merit the crown of life.

O Jesus, grant us the grace to practise this most

difficult, yet most meritorious of the Christian virtues! that so we may merit to live in love and charity for ever with Thee. Amen.

O Heart of Mary, reflex of the infinitely charitable Heart of thy Son, Jesus Christ, obtain for us that the divine prayer of thy Jesus may have effect on our souls, and that we may receive pardon for all the injuries we have committed against Him by our sins. Amen.

Short reflection.

Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ, crucified for us, humbly but with great confidence we beseech Thee to be merciful to all here gathered round Thy Cross, and to all those for whom we wish to pray, especially for—(here mention your particular intention). Grant us the grace to know Thee, to love Thee, and to be truly sorry that till now we have known and loved Thee so little.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory, etc.

THE SECOND WORD

At that time, one of those robbers who were hanged spake blasphemy against Him, saying: "If Thou be the Christ, save Thyself and us." But the other answered and rebuked him, saying: "Dost not even thou fear God, seeing that thou are in the same condemnation: And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man hath done nothing amiss." And he said unto Jesus: "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt enter into Thy kingdom." And Jesus said unto him: "Amen, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."—Luke XXIII, 39-43.

The Saviour's prayer on the Cross was not a mere vague petition for pardon of mankind in general. It extended to each individual of that throng and brought light and grace to each according to the disposition of his heart. The efficacy of that prayer we see from the effects that followed.

When standing by the open grave of Lazarus, Jesus groaned in spirit, and lifting His eyes to heaven, said: "Father, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast heard Me. And I know that Thou hearest Me always." And now in response to His prayer for the pardon of His enemies we see the first fruits in the conduct of the penitent thief. This criminal was one of those who jeered at Him only a few minutes before, in company with the others. But his heart was softened and humbled by his sufferings, and we know that the heart that is humbled is near to its conversion. Hence, for him the grace of repentance fresh come from heaven in response to the Saviour's prayer. This is why we see him who but a little while before joined with the others in blaspheming the Saviour, now penitent; and addressing Him in humble petition, he cried out: "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy Kingdom." And our Saviour answered him instantly and vouchsafed him a pardon infinitely more generous than he could have hoped for. All he dared to petition for was a bare remembrance; and behold, not only a remembrance did the Saviour give him, but He gave him the assurance that

On That Very Day

he would be with Him in Paradise. Oh, touching example of love and mercy of the Saviour to the penitent sinner, towards all those who approach Him to ask Him for the pardon of their past sins.

Nor was this striking conversion of the penitent thief the solitary response to the prayer of Jesus on the Cross. On the contrary, a couple of hours afterwards we find whole multitudes, and among them many of the leaders among His persecutors, led to penitence. For, the Gospel tells us that numbers of those who stood around the Cross and saw Him die, joined with the centurion in crying out: "This was indeed the Son of God," and "They returned to Jerusalem striking their breasts."

Nor was even this all. Those wondrous conversions that took place on Calvary were only the beginnings of the conversion of sinners effected as the result of that prayer of Jesus on the Cross.

And Among Them Our Own.

Yes, all the conversions of sinners to the end of time are to be regarded as the fruits of that divine prayer; all the calls to salvation; all the lights and graces conferred upon the just; and all the glory of the blessed; for we were all sinners and rebels against the Divine Majesty, till received and pardoned through the prayer and voluntary sacrifice of Jesus, our Redeemer, on the Cross.

And even as the creative words first spoken by God: "Let light be made," were the cause of all light, and intelligence, and knowledge in the world; and even as the other creative words addressed to our first parents in paradise; "increase and multiply," have filled the earth with their descendants; and even as those other words spoken in the Supper Chamber: "This is My Body. This is My Blood; do this for a commemoration of Me," have perpetuated His presence among us sacramentally for all time; so, the divine words of pardon pronounced by Him on the

Cross: "Father, forgive them," have been the cause and the source of all forgiveness to men down to our day, and will be to the end of time.

O Jesus, merciful and pitying Lord, we confess that we also have been among the number of Thy enemies. We have daringly and repeatedly transgressed Thy holy commandments. We repent with our whole heart over our past transgressions, which had merited for us the eternal chastisements of hell. Henceforth we promise to love and serve Thee all our lives.

Deign, O merciful Saviour, to remember us in Thy Paradise of peace. Forgive us in Thy love and mercy, and grant that we may be numbered among Thy pardoned ones who are destined to live forever with Thee.

Short reflection.

Prayer (Page 295).

O Lord Jesus Christ, etc. Our Father, etc.

THE THIRD WORD

Now there were standing by the cross of Jesus, His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. When therefore Jesus saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, "Woman, behold thy son!" Then He saith unto the disciple, "Behold thy mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her into his own house.—John XIX, 25-27.

The third word of Jesus on the Cross does but confirm and amplify our knowledge of the infinite love of Jesus for us and for all mankind. By His prayer for His tormentors the Saviour gave to the world the sublimest example of charity, and with insist-

ence urged the precept which He Himself gave, on all those who receive injury from others. By the repentance of the good thief, and by his reception of pardon, we witness the first results of the efficacy of that prayer; an efficacy which is further shown by the conversion of multitudes at His death. These are but the beginnings of a conversion which is offered to all. And now to give stability to their conversion and to crown their penance by perseverance, He entrusts to the keeping of His Holy Mother the whole human race.

This Blessed Mother had stood by Him in His Passion when all others were His enemies. She consoled Him in His agony in the Garden, and was His sole comfort when His Father "laid upon Him the iniquities of us all." She was present by her sympathy at the scourging and the crowning with thorns, and on the dolorous way to Calvary. And now, as the Gospel takes care to notify: "There stood by the cross of Jesus His Mother." Yes, she stood and fainted not, this "strong woman" of the Scriptures. She went down with Him to the depths of suffering. She waded with Him through the sea of His most bitter Passion, and thus earned for herself the quality and title of "Queen of Martyrs," and of Co-redemptress of our race." And now to confer stability on our conversion and to obtain for us final perseverance through the efficacy of her mediation with Him, He endowed her with the quality of

"Mother of All the Living,"

which the first woman lost by her sin.

"Behold thy son," He said to her standing by the foot of the cross; and to St. John, "Behold thy mother." John on the occasion personified the whole human race; and Mary at that instant took on her-

self the motherhood of us all. To each one of us she became a mother. And even as at the Annunciation she gave her assent to the Divine Maternity, saying: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to Me according to Thy word," so now in travail and sorrow at the foot of the cross she is made the second Eve, "the Mother of all the living." And oh, at what a cost, and in the midst of what a sea of sorrows!

The Gospel continues: "and from that hour he took her to his own." He took her to his own. The beloved disciple provided her with a house, in place of the home of Nazareth or Capharnaum, and for her Jesus he is given her as a son. He indeed received her with reverence and love, and, we may believe, was overwhelmed with gratitude at the thought of such a commission. But what an exchange on the part of the Divine Mother! "John," says St. Bernard, "is given for her Jesus; the son of Zebedee, for the Son of God." What grief for the tender Mother! since the very thought of it affects us to tears, and tears open up our iron breasts! But this grief she joyfully bears and she feels her tenderness for us increase at the thought of all the good she can do for us, and of the opportunities her new relation to us gives her to advance our interests with her Son.

Behold Your Mother

then, beloved souls. In sorrow she begot you on Calvary. It was there that was fulfilled in her the words of Scripture addressed to our first mother, Eve: "In sorrow shall thou bring forth children." And by how much the greater was her sorrow; by so much the greater should be the love that we exhibit towards her; and by so much the

greater should be the confidence we repose in her, and the veneration we have for her.

O Mother of Jesus, Mother of our souls; deign to receive us as thy children. We have indeed, many a time, brought sorrow on thy maternal heart by our inconstancy and sins. But thou rememberest that we are only weak mortals. Deign now to receive our repentance and offer to thy Divine Son, Jesus, our regret and our sorrow. May we henceforth make amends to Him by our constancy and our fidelity for all our past treachery and malice; and may we through thee obtain the grace of final perseverance. Amen.

HYMN

Rose of the Cross, thou Mystic Flower,
I lift my heart to thee;
In every melancholy hour,
Mary, remember me!

Let me but stand where thou hast stood
Beside the crimson tree;
And by the Water and the Blood,
Mary, remember me!

There let me wash my sinful soul
And be from sin set free:
Drawn by thy love, by grace made whole,
Mary, remember me!

Rose of the Cross, thou thornless Flower,
May I thy follower be;
And when temptation wields its power,
Mary, remember me!

Prayer, O Lord (Page 295).

Our Father, etc.

THE FOURTH WORD

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying: "Eli, Eli, lamma sabacthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"—Matt. XXVII, 46.

This text brings us to the contemplation of the fourth word of Jesus on the Cross. That word is the cry of dereliction to His Father, which is expressed by the words: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me!"

The beloved disciple introduces the history of the Passion to us by saying: "Jesus having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them to the end." What is the signification of these mystic words of the Evangelist? "He loved His own to the end." Do they mean that the Saviour loved His own to the end of His life? This would not be an unusual love nor an extraordinary one on the part of our Blessed Saviour. For, even worldly people ordinarily love their friends to the end of their life. No, they mean more, much more. The signification of the words then is that Jesus loved His own as much as, and as far as a God could love them; that is to say, to express it in the words of the Scripture: "He loved them with an everlasting love." This brought on Him the anger of His Father, for, He carried in Himself "the iniquity of us all." By our sins we had earned the everlasting hatred of God. For, as the Scripture says, "To God, the sinner and his sins are hateful alike." Mortal sin is an offense of infinite malice against God. Therefore, it merits an infinite punishment at the hands of the Eternal

Judge. Our Blessed Lord had voluteered to pay the entire penalty of our sins.

"He Suffered Because He Willed It."

This made the Eternal Father inexorable in His punishment of Him. The thunderbolts of His anger surged around His devoted head.

Infinitely generous as Jesus was, still did His human nature cry out under the weight of His Father's fury. A little while before in the garden of Gethsemani the agony that seized Him at the sight of the sins of all mankind, and at their hideousness, so worked upon Him that human nature of itself could not bear them, and He cried out and said: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death!" And "O Father, if it be possible let this chalice pass from Me." The chalice that He was compelled to drink was not made up of the indignities, or of the sufferings inflicted on Him by men. These the Saviour could bear with composure; for all men's efforts are puny when directed against God. But the weight of His Father's anger for sin, this it was that frightened Him. The clouds of that anger gathered around Him and darkened the light of day. The Eternal Father withdrew the light of His countenance from Him. Nay, by a marvel of generosity the Saviour Himself allowed the light of the Beatific Vision which as the Eternal Son of God he by right should enjoy, to be withdrawn from Him, and thus He underwent the "pain of loss," that suffering which of itself is sufficient to make up the torment of the damned. Hence, that piercing cry of anguish come out from the inmost depths of His Being, and which with a double invocation of His Father He cries out:

"My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?"

O dearly beloved, let that agonizing cry of our Saviour on the Cross bring home to you the greatness of the malice of sin. It was sin, the sins of mankind, and among them your personal sins that pressed on the heart of Jesus Christ on the Cross, and drew from Him that agonizing cry. It was your sin; for you were there, and your place was among the torturers of Jesus. With the Jews, with that frenzied crowd you called on your Saviour in mockery to come down from the Cross; for they were only our executioners. Pilate, Herod, Caiphas, Judas, the soldiers, the chief priests; they only carried out the sentence of death inflicted on the Saviour in punishment of our sins.

Nay, it was our sins that urged on the Eternal Father "to lay on Him the iniquities of us all." For as the Scripture says: "For the sins of My people have I stricken Him." "He bore our miseries, and He carried our sorrows." "He was wounded for our iniquities. He was bruised for our sins."

There is another thought that the agonizing cry of our Saviour calls to our mind, and it is the awful punishment of the damned. We know that the chief torture of the reprobate souls is the pain of loss. Now, the pain of loss in the reprobate is none other than their eternal seperation from God, their Last End. And if the temporary abandonment of the Man-God by His Father that He might suffer the depths of punishment for sin called forth that agonizing cry which is so like a cry of despair, what must be the agony of the lost souls when they realize that their separation from God is absolute and eternal?

O Jesus, infinite Victim for sin, grant that we may never experience that separation from Thee, our

God. Grant, rather, that redeemed and pardoned through the efficacy of Thy sufferings and death we may be received into Thy holy embraces to share happiness and love with Thee forever in heaven. "O holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope: * * * turn thine eyes of mercy toward us and grant that after this our exile in this vale of tears" we may be united to our God, and share eternal happiness with Him and thee in the Paradise of thy Son. Amen.

Short reflection.

Prayer, O Lord (Page 295).

Our Father, etc.

THE FIFTH WORD

Afterwards, Jesus, knowing that all things were now finished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said: "I thirst." And immediately one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink.—John XIX, 28.

I

I have already remarked that in our meditation on the Passion we are chiefly affected by the exterior sufferings of our Lord—by the sufferings that come under the domain of the senses. We are affected, I say, at the contemplation of His dolorous sweat of Blood in the garden of Gethsemani, of His scourging, of His crowning with thorns, of the carrying of the Cross, of the Crucifixion. His interior sufferings we are made aware of only as they are made known to us by the words of our Lord Himself. This is to be remarked especially concerning the agony brought to our observation through means of

the Fifth Word spoken by Jesus on the Cross: "I thirst."

Now thirst, looked upon ordinarily as a minor suffering, can in reality be accounted among the greatest of agonies that a mortal can be subjected to. This is so true that the classical poets writing about Tantalus, King of Lydia, who was said to have committed some outrage against the immortal gods, represent him as being punished in hell where he was subjected to the torture of an implacable thirst, while a stream of water flowed by his chin which vanished when he tried by it to wet his parched lips.

And in fact those who witness thirst in others, as in the case of shipwreck, or of fever, or when passing over an inhospitable desert, tell us that the victim ordinarily becomes delirious from his sufferings and gets out of all control—a thing which those suffering from the most grievious fractures of limb or body do not, though their sufferings are extreme. And who does not know that when soldiers are found lying on the battlefield their bodies torn to pieces by shot and shell, the one agony that seems to exceed all others

Is Thirst

—an agony which tortures them to death.

This agony of thirst seems in a peculiar way to affect those who suffer the penalty of death by crucifixion. The whole weight of the body suspended on the pierced hands and feet, opens wide the wounds of the nails which at every moment pour out torrents of blood. Moreover, the violence of their agony which, increasing every moment, suffuses the body with a shower of sweat, in a short time dries up the whole frame. And the distorted position of

the body stops the free passage of the vital fluid in the arteries. These causes combined bring on an intolerable thirst whose violence comprises within itself every other pain; and the withered veins and arteries shrunken like a dried sponge bring on a situation where the wretched victim calls out for death to put an end to his intolerable misery.

Jesus has now passed many hours of the most grievous torture. A sleepless night, added to the scourging, the crowning with thorns, and the crucifixion, has dried up His body in such sort that to the eyes of the seer who saw Him in prophecy He is represented as crying out: "My strength is dried up like a potshred; My tongue hath cleaved to My jaws and Thou hast brought Me down to the dust of death." "The most beautiful among the sons of men," He now puts on "a look hidden and despised," and "He is become as a worm and no man."

This, with the outpouring of blood from His pierced hands and feet on the cross, had now exhausted His most Sacred Heart. And in the effort of nature to fill out again His veins and arteries an implacable thirst comes upon Him so that He is constrained to cry out in His agony: "I thirst"—a cry that opens up to us a new view of the sufferings of Jesus on the Cross, a view that represents to us this thirst as one of His major sufferings.

II

But it was not physical thirst alone that affected the dying Saviour. The words have another and a far more significant sense in this, that that thirst has refernce to the glory of His Father and to the salvation of souls.

All strong emotions of desire may be called a

thirst; and in this sense the Saviour Himself pronounced a blessing on those who desire to attain a life of perfection, as in the Beatitude: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill." It was thus that the Saviour Himself had a thirst for His Faaher's glory, and for the salvation of souls. And it was foretold of Him: "The zeal of Thy house, O Lord hath eaten me up"—a prophecy which had reference to the chasing of the buyers and sellers out of the temple. He says again: "My meat," that is to say, "it is eating and drinking for Me" "to do the will of My Father who is in heaven." And speaking of the Crucifixion in His eagerness for the salvation of souls He says: "I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized, and how am I not straightened," how do I not thirst with desire, "until it be accomplished."

Calvary is the culmination of the desires and of the virtues of the Saviour. In that last hour of His life He is pressed with a more ardent longing than heretofore to achieve the glory of His Father, and to bring about the salvation of men, and this impels Him to give utterance to His wish: "I thirst." He, the Good Shepherd, saw the souls made to His own image and likeness, those princesses of the heavenly court, for whom He was about to die, on all sides in the grip of the infernal wolf. The beauty of their nature enhanced by supernatural grace, made them charming in His eyes, and He longed most ardently for their salvation. The spiritual evils to which He saw them exposed from the temptations of the devil and their own insane folly only whetted the ardent longing He had to bring them into the fold and save them. This longing He cannot hide in His bosom, and therefore, His ardent cry which comes from the depths of His twofold nature: "I thirst."

I Thirst for Souls,

and therefore it is that I am ready to undergo every penalty, to make every sacrifice, in order to their salvation and to bring them to their home in heaven. I thirst to give glory to My Father in obedience to whom I came into the world.

Dearly beloved, such was the love of Jesus Christ for His Father's glory and for our salvation. Are we affected with the same love? and what do we do for the glory of God and the salvation of souls? Do we thirst for God's glory, for the salvation of souls, and what do we do for their advancement in virtue? Oh, think of all those who are near and dear to us, of that great throng of the faithful who are bound to us by the ties of holy charity, who are members of the same Church and who labor for the same end as we. Strive then to help them to achieve their best good by praying that they be eternally united to God. Pray especially for your own near relatives, and for those to whom you are bound by the ties of justice and gratitude. How many whom perhaps in the past you have scandalized, and who as the result of your bad example are now in the danger of hell. Pray that this blessed day of the Redemption may be for them as for you a day of pardon and repetance, that so you and they may share together in the delights of salvation in the house of the Lord, your God.

Prayer for the conversion of souls.

HYMN

By the Blood that flowed from Thee
In Thy bitter agony,
By the scourge so meekly borne,
By Thy purple robe of scorn.

CHORUS

Jesus, Saviour, hear our cry,
Thou wert suffering once as we.
Hear the loving litany,
We, Thy children, sing to Thee.

By the thorns that crowned Thy head,
By Thy sceptre of a reed,
By Thy footsteps, faint and slow,
Weighed beneath Thy Cross of woe.

By the nails and pointed spear,
By the people's cruel jeer,
By Thy dying prayer which rose,
Begging mercy for Thy foes.

By the darkness thick as night,
Blotting out the sun from sight;
By the cry with which in death,
Thou didst yield Thy parting breath.

By Thy weeping Mother's woe,
By the sword that pierced her through,
When in anguish standing by,
On the Cross she saw Thee die.

Prayer, O Lord (Page 295).

Our Father, etc.

THE SIXTH WORD

At that time one of them that stood by, ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar and gave Him to drink. When Jesus therefore had taken the vinegar, He said: "It is consummated."—John XIX, 29-30.

It is now approaching the ninth hour of the day. The great drama of the Crucifixion is drawing to a close. The sun long hidden behind the great bank of clouds that hung over Jerusalem and the Holy Mount now begins to appear again high over the western horizon. All that is yet to take place is the final rendering of the soul of the Saviour into the hands of His Father. Like the Conqueror that He is, He surveys the field of combat and He sees that everything laid out for Him to do has been accomplished and that the victory is complete. All that had been foretold of Him by the prophets has been fulfilled. He went back in spirit to the first great prophecy made by God Himself in the sentence imposed by Him on the tempter: "I will put enmities between thee and the Seed of the Woman. He shall crush thy head and thou shalt lie in wait for His heel." And now the devil is under His foot, and the Redemption He came to accomplish is just at hand.

All the other events pertaining to the great fight as foretold by the prophets have taken place. He came of the royal line of David. He had for His Mother the most pure of Virgins. He was born in Bethlehem of Ephreta. He lived for thirty years in the home of Nazareth. He preached the Gospel to the poor. He healed the sick. He raised the dead. He cleansed the lepers. He cast out the devils from the bodies of the possessed. Oh, yes; He laid the

foundations of His Church. He purged His Father's house of the buyers and sellers who had profaned it by turning it into a market place. He rode in triumph into Jerusalem. Greatest of all, He instituted the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and He gave us His Flesh to eat and His Blood to drink.

Lastly, the great drama of the Redemption itself was all but accomplished. He passed through the dreadful agony and sweat of Blood in the Garden. He surveyed again the scene of the Scourging in Pilate's Hall, and saw the Sacred Blood pouring out in torrents from His bruised Body. The dreadful scene of the Crowning with Thorns is once again enacted before His eyes. He sees Himself carrying wearily the cross up the dolorous way to Calvary amid the mockeries and contempt of the soldiers and the frenzied multitude. Every item pertaining to the Crucifixion as foretold in the Scriptures has been to the letter fulfilled. And now He sees the great triumph that awaits Him in the salvation of innumerable souls that but await the moment of His death for their delivery from the bondage of sin. As He Himself had foretold: "When I shall be lifted up, I shall draw all things to Myself." Thus

The Victor Surveys the Field of Combat.

And in the satisfaction of His heart He sees that the victory is perfect and complete.

He looks up into the face of His Eternal Father and He sees that the clouds of anger which separated Him from the Beatific Vision have all passed away. The Divine justice has been satisfied. Sin has been expiated to the full. The human race has been redeemed, and the fathers in Limbo but await the few moments of time yet to be gone through to

receive the Conquror who is Himself to announce to them the tidings of their delivery. "It is indeed a day which the Lord hath made."

He looks into the future. He sees the Church established in all lands, that Church which is to last to the end of time. He sees the innumerable multitude of souls that are to be drawn into the fold, the virtues of the just, and salvation extended to all mankind as the result of the great combat. He sees the veil rent that separated man from his God, and the song of the blessed spirits: "Open ye eternal gates and let the Just enter in," and the everlasting joys that are to be accorded them in heaven.

"It Is Consummated."

What more is to be done but to render His soul into the hands of His Father and to return whence He came? But in the meantime the record must be made that He consummated for us a plenteous Redemption. Hence, the strong cry which resounds throughout the universe. It is heard in the depths of hell, and the princes of evil are by it thrown into rage and despair. It is heard by mankind to the uttermost generation yet to come. And even as the walls of Jericho fell at the sound of the trumpets of the Israelites; so, as the consequence of that triumphant cry the chains of sin and slavery to the devil fall from men's limbs.

The Redemption of the World Is Accomplished.

It ascends into heaven and rings in the ears of the Most High, and at the sound of its triumphant notes the anger of God is appeased. Justice and mercy have kissed. Peace is brought about between God and man.

Oh, surely, "it is a day which the Lord hath made," a day to be held in eternal remembrance. "It is consummated."

And we also, dearly beloved, should rejoice at the triumphant words. They are the charter of our liberty, the record of the blotting out of the death sentence that was written against us in the book of our God. Oh, well may we rejoice, dearly beloved, and while we rejoice at the accomplishment of our Redemption, may we lay hold of the graces purchased for us at such a price, may we be faithful to the lights and helps given us, that thus we may be numbered among the elect, and made sharers in salvation.

PROSE SONG

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water out of the side of Christ, wash me.
Sacred Heart, inflame me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Within Thy wounds hide me.
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.
From the malignant enemy defend me.
At the hour of my death call me,
And bid me come to Thee,
That with Thy saints I may praise Thee,
For all eternity. Amen.

Prayer, O Lord (Page 295).

Our Father, etc.

THE LAST WORD OF JESUS ON THE CROSS

(The following meditation is adapted in good part from Bellerd's meditation on "The Cause of Christ's Death.")

And it was almost the sixth hour; and there was darkness all over the land until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." And having said this He gave up the Ghost. —Luke XXIII, 4-6.

These last words of Jesus on the Cross give a dramatic ending to the tragedy of Calvary. For ,whereas it was long drawn out in its details, it was sudden in its close. Moreover, in ordinary deaths the sufferer passes away from extreme exhaustion; here on the contrary, Jesus to the last showed robust strength and vigor. This leads us to reverently inquire what was the immediate cause of the death of our Saviour.

That His physical and mental sufferings were sufficient, and more than sufficient to cause His death, anyone who reads the history of the Passion can infer. The Saviour Himself indeed tells us as much; for, in that pathetic cry given forth by Him in His agony in the Garden, He says: "My soul is sorrowful unto death." The long watching, the outrages, the scourging, the carrying of the cross, the process of Crucifixion; all would have led to a gradual failure of strength, and death by exhaustion.

But the event showed that death did not result from these. To the last He dwelt on the prophecies; He observed those who surrounded Him; He attended to details. And now the loud and piercing cry

at the moment of dissolution shows Him to be still possessed of much physical strength. These facts fully accord with what our Lord Himself said: "I lay down My life, and no man taketh it away from Me * * * but I lay it down Myself; and I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again." Hence, it may be concluded that the separation of His soul from His Body was not the result of the physical violence He endured, but of His own free will.

This accords, moreover, with His Sovereignty as Lord of life and death. It accords with His power as God, and the fullness of deliberate choice with which He died for us. The Jews were not able to kill Him before the appointed moment arrived. During the Passion, and especially in the agony in the Garden, He endured many times over what was sufficient to cause His death. But He did not die till He Himself pronounced the decree: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." Then He allowed His mental and bodily sufferings to take effect. He suspended the divine influx which made Him immortal. He allowed death to approach, as He gave permission to the temple guards to seize Him in the Garden.

If further we would investigate the immediate cause of that death, we have every reason to believe what is told in the *Revelations of St. Bridget* that

"He Died of a Broken Heart."

This accords with the prophecies, "I am poured out like water." "My Heart is become as wax in the midst of My bowels." And again, as it is in the Hebrew: "reproach hath broken My Heart." The facts of the agony in the Garden indicate that our Lord was at the point of death from paralysis of

the heart's functions caused by His mortal anguish. The angel gave Him new strength and the Heart's action became so violent as to expel the Blood through the pores of the Body. This was the agony or struggle against the horror at the sight of our sins. The same agony renewed on the Cross caused the rupture which is called a broken heart. Such a death is always accompanied by a piercing cry and with the effusion of collected blood into the region around the heart, where it is disintegrated into red-clot and serum—"blood and water." Thus it was that the love of Jesus for us, and the weight of our sins were the actual and complete cause of His death, and led to the complete outpouring of His Precious Blood. This was the real "rending of the veil" of the Holy of Holies. We then, sinners, really caused our Saviour's death by our sins. We broke our Saviour's Heart!

"We Broke Our Saviour's Heart!"

We brought Him to His painful and humiliating death of Calvary.

When children are brought to realize that by their wayward and unfeeling action they have saddened a kind and tender parent, what can they do but regret it bitterly, and by a conduct wise, virtuous, and irreproachable try to make amends for their past impiety.

My brethren, you and I, all of us, have been guilty of the most unseemly conduct towards our good and tender Father, Jesus Christ. During His Passion we were among the ranks of His declared enemies. We broke His Sacred Heart! Yes, we broke His Sacred Heart. It was grief at our sins that broke the Heart of Jesus. In the garden of Gethsemani

we caused Him to shed His sweat of Blood, and forced Him to declare that His "Soul was sorrowful even unto death." It was we who by our sins of sensuality caused His Body to be scourged, so that there "was left no sound spot in Him" and His Blood bespattered the hall of Pilate. Our sins of pride it was that pressed the cruel thorns of His crown into His sacred brow, so that His Blood streamed down His neck and face, and festooned His hair and beard. The weight of our sins pressed heavily on His shoulders as He carried the cross over the dolorous way to Calvary.

We were among the frenzied crowd that surged around the Cross and jeered Him in His agony. The Jews, the high priests, Herod, Pilate, the soldiers, all, who were they but our agents in wreaking cruelty and malice on the innocent Saviour? We broke His tender Heart. We shed His Blood in the final effort and agony of Calvary.

On Your Knees Then!

And before the throne of Divine mercy from out of the depths of your grieved hearts cry out: Mercy! Jesus! Mercy! Lord, we acknowledge that we have grievously offended Thee by our past sins. We have broken Thy Sacred Heart. "Out of the depths of our humiliation and sorrow then we cry to Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear our voice. Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of our supplication. If Thou wilt mark iniquities, O Lord: Lord, who shall stand it?" "Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great mercy! And according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out our iniquities. Wash us yet more from our iniquities and

cleanse us from our sins; for we know our iniquities, and our sins are always before us."

Prayer, O Lord (Page 295).

Our Father, etc.

Should any additional time remain, it can be fittingly employed in making the stations of the Cross, or in the recitation of the five sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary; and the whole service should terminate with the recitation of five "Our Fathers" and "Hail Marys" for the Pope's intention in order to gain the plenary indulgence conceded by the Church.

Laus Deo Semper.

INDEX

Page

A

Abba, My Father 69
Abraham's Bosom 202
Absolom 177
Aedan, St 272
Agilberct 273
Aldfrid, King 278
Alfred the Great 278
Alice Sp. Green 273, 276
All Saints' Day 244
All Souls' Day 252
Ambrose, St. 14
Americanism 259
Anglo-Saxon Con. 273
Annegrey 274
Arab System 159
Armagh 278
Assiduity 27
Assyria 82
Augustine, St. 8, 9, 272

B

Baptism 67, 71, 75
Baptize 75, 79
Bath of Regeneration 73
Bavaria 274
Bavaria Sancta 275
Beatitudes 250
Benburb 226
Benedict XI 179
Bernard, St. 274
Bettulia 229
Bezeleel 6
Bobbio 274
Bonaventure, St. 178
Burgundy 274

C

Caesar 184, 189
Celestial Manna 28
Chaldea 82

Page

Child 153, 156
Children 136, 141, 173, 180
Children of God 69
Church-rack 35
Cleanness 10
Clonmacnois 218
Columbanus, St. 274, 279
Columbkille, St. 271
Commandment 100, 109
Company-Keeping 88, 97
Confederation 227
Confirmation 210, 215
Consecration 127
Confraternity 39, 52
Council of Trent 76
Covet, Thou Shalt Not 186
Cyprian, St. 5, 14
Cyril, St. 132

D

Dagobert II 278
Darmesteter, M. 277
David 164
Day, That 48
Deacons 13
Dominic, St. 53, 231
Duties of Children 73, 180
Duties of Parents
136, 141, 146, 153, 156

E

Ecclesiastical Spirit 4
Egbert, King 279
Eli, Eli, etc 303
Eliachim 229
Ephesus 2
Eternity of Hell 20, 206
Eucharist 125, 128, 132
Eugenius, Pope 8
Excessive Divertion 89
Exodus, Book of 93
Extrinsic Helps 42

Page

F

False Teachers 46
Father, Forgive Them 294, 298
Firmness 10
France 274

G

Garden of Olives 59
Gifts of the H. G. 215
Glastonbury 273
Glorious Mysteries 58
God, A Hidden 67
Good Samaritan 36, 166
Good Shepherd 166
Gregory, St., the Gr. 279
Gregory, St. Naz. 68, 71
Guide, the Priest as 18

H

Heart-Training 149
Hell, Eternity of 201
Hidden Manna 126
Holiness 10
Holy Places 116
Holy Souls 253
Holy Week 281
House of God 120
House of Prayer 120
Hundred Percenters 262

I

Idleness 89
Ignorance 24
Indulgences 44, 45
Ingersoll 203
Inisfail 279
Ireland 225
"Isle of Saints" 277
"It Is Consummated" 311

Page

J

Jacob's Well 168
Jewish Sabbath 83
John, Chrystostom, St. 132
Jonas, St. .....
Jesephus 283
Judge, the Priest as 22
Judith 229
Justice 184

K

Keller, Frederic 276
Kent, Conversion of 273

L

"Land of the Free" 259
Law of Grace 165
Lazarus 201
Learning Required in Priests 16
Light of the Soul 67
Lightfoot, Dr. 273
Lindesfarne 272
Lismore 274
Love of Neighbor 98, 101, 102, 105
Love of Parents 173
Luan, St. 274
Luxeuil 274

M

Magdalen, the 167
Mahommedans 122
Malmsbury 273
Man, the End of 192, 197
Manna 93
Mannasses 164
Martin, M. Henri 276
Matter and Form 77

Page

Mediator, the Priest as 16, 17
"Medice, cura te-ipsum" 30
Melchiades, St. 210, 211
"Melting Pot" 260
Members of the 71
Mercier, Cardnial 279
Mercy of God 162
Mind, Training of 146
Missionaries, Irish 268, 269
Mixed Marriages 110, 112
Mothers' Day 173
Mount Sinai 82

N

Nagasachi 224
Naim 169
"New Man" 10
Nineveh 164
Northumberland 272

O

Obedience 180
Old Dispensation 162
"Old Man" 1
Oolah 6
Original Sin 79
Ostrich 112
Oswald, St. 272, 278
"Our Father" 54

P

Palm Sunday 281
Parents, Duties of 136, 141
Parents 146, 153, 156
Parents, Love of 173
Parents, Respect for 176
Paschal Lamb 288
Passover 286
Pastors, Duties of 26
Patriotism 262, 264

Page

Paulinus, St. 272
Pellican, of the 139
Perfect 11
Peter, St. 68
Physician of Souls 23
Pius V, St. 230
Prayers for the Dead 252
Priest as Guide 18
Priest as Teacher 19
Priest as Judge 22
Priest as Mediator 16
Puget Sound 265

R

Real Presence 133
Religious Societies 38, 43, 52, 58, 62, 65
Rending of the Veil 317
Renuccini, Cardinal 226
Restitution 189
Rosary 221, 231
Russell, Pastor 203

S

Sabbath 81
Sacrament of the Living 217
Sacrifice 287, 288
Salamanca 224
Scalager le Jeune 276
School Room 36
Scotland 270
Seneca 122
Service 181
Sensitive People 82
Servile Works 83
Seven Last Words 291
Shepherd, Good 30
Sinful Words 86
"Sobrius esto" 8
Social Crime 143
Society 68, 71

	Page
Soggarth	33
Soldier of Christ	218
Soliman	229
Sorbonne	224
Solomon	112, 179
Spiritual Activity	94
Stable of Bethlehem	61
Steal	184
Summa Theologica	140
Sunday	87, 90
Sunday's Mass	151

T

Tabernacle	6
Teacher	19
Temple	73
Thanksgiving	238
Theatres	123
Thomas, St.	140
Thirst, I.	305, 308
Transubstantiation	125
Triumph	244
Triumphant	284
True Holiness	2

U

Unlawful Oper.	145

V

Vigilance	27, 30
Vigor	27, 34
Visits, Pastor	31
Vocal Element	52

W

Wallenback, Dr.	275
White, Crimson and Gold	234
Wilson, President	265
Wolves	49
Woman	298

Z

Zacheus	38
Zeal	23, 27, 168
Zimmer, Prof.	276

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